

success was continued in 1856 by *The Daisy Chain*, and again the proceeds—amounting, it is said, to £2000—went for the building of a missionary college at Auckland, in New Zealand.

Miss Yonge's books exercised a wide and wholesome influence on those of her own generation, and it has been said that few writers have done so much to mould the mind of the “English girl, divine, demure”. She was essentially earnest, and maintained in all her works a high standard of gentleness and grace.

In *The Little Duke* we have an excellent example of the many stories Miss Yonge wove about the different manners of life among different peoples. Besides being a pleasant tale, designed partly to show the influence the Christian religion exercised as a civilizing force, it depicts in picturesque and faithful colours a Europe which has long ago passed away—a Europe in which only two figures were of grand importance: the figure of the true knight, and the figure of the servant of Christ.

adding to the wreaths of soot, which made the hall look still darker.

The fire at the lower end was by far the larger and hotter. Great black caldrons hung over it, and servants, both men and women, with red faces, bare and grimed arms, and long iron hooks, or pots and pans, were busied around it. At the other end, which was raised about three steps above the floor of the hall, other servants were engaged. Two young maidens were strewing fresh rushes on the floor; some men were setting up a long table of rough boards, supported on trestles, and then ranging upon it silver cups, drinking horns, and wooden trenchers.

Benches were placed to receive most of the guests, but in the middle, at the place of honour, was a high chair with very thick crossing legs, and the arms curiously carved with lions' faces and claws; a clumsy wooden footstool was set in front, and the silver drinking-cup on the table was of far more beautiful workmanship than the others, richly chased with vine leaves and grapes, and figures of little boys with goats' legs. If that cup could have told its story, it would have been a strange one, for it had been

"I hit him, I hit him! Dame Astrida, do you hear? 'Tis a stag of ten branches, and I hit him in the neck."

"You! my Lord Richard! you killed him?"

"O no! I only struck him. It was Osmond's shaft that took him in the eye, and——Look you, Fru Astrida, he came thus through the wood, and I stood here, it might be, under the great elm, with my bow thus——" And Richard was beginning to act over again the whole scene of the deer-hunt, but Fru, that is to say, Lady Astrida, was too busy to listen, and broke in with, "Have they brought home the haunch?"

"Yes, Walter is bringing it. I had a long arrow——"

A stout forester was at that instant seen bringing in the venison, and Dame Astrida hastened to meet it, and give directions, little Richard following her all the way, and talking as eagerly as if she was attending to him, showing how he shot, how Osmond shot, how the deer bounded, and how it fell, and then counting the branches of its antlers, always ending with, "This is something to tell my father. Do you think he will come soon?"

On this day, Duke William himself was expected at Bayeux, to pay a visit to his son before setting out on a journey to settle the disputes between the Counts of Flanders and Montreuil, and this was the reason of Fru Astrida's great preparations. No sooner had she seen the haunch placed upon a spit, which a little boy was to turn before the fire, than she turned to dress something else, namely, the young Prince Richard himself, whom she led off to one of the upper rooms, and there he had full time to talk, while she, great lady though she was, herself combed smooth his long flowing curls, and fastened his short scarlet cloth tunic, which just reached to his knee, leaving his neck, arms, and legs bare. He begged hard to be allowed to wear a short, beautifully ornamented dagger at his belt, but this, Fru Astrida would not allow.

“You will have enough to do with steel and dagger before your life is at an end,” said she, “without seeking to begin over soon.”

“To be sure I shall,” answered Richard. “I will be called Richard of the Sharp Axe, or the Bold Spirit, I promise you, Fru Astrida. We are as brave in these days as the Sigurds and

hair was covered by his ducal cap of purple, turned up with fur, and a feather fastened in by a jewelled clasp. His brow was grave and thoughtful, and there was something both of dignity and sorrow in his face, at the first moment of looking at it, recalling the recollection that he had early lost his young wife, the Duchess Emma, and that he was beset by many cares and toils; but the next glance generally conveyed encouragement, so full of mildness were his eyes, and so kind the expression of his lips.

And now, how bright a smile beamed upon the little Richard, who, for the first time, paid him the duty of a pupil in chivalry, by holding the stirrup while he sprung from his horse. Next, Richard knelt to receive his blessing, which was always the custom when children met their parents. The Duke laid his hand on his head, saying, "God of His mercy bless thee, my son," and lifting him in his arms, held him to his breast, and let him cling to his neck and kiss him again and again, before setting him down, while Sir Eric came forward, bent his knee, kissed the hand of his prince, and welcomed him to his castle.

the Count of Harcourt on his left; Osmond carved for the Duke, and Richard handed his cup and trencher. All through the meal, the Duke and his Lords talked earnestly of the expedition on which they were bound to meet Count Arnulf of Flanders, on a little islet in the river Somme, there to come to some agreement, by which Arnulf might make restitution to Count Herluin of Montreuil, for certain wrongs which he had done him.

Some said that this would be the fittest time for requiring Arnulf to yield up some towns on his borders, to which Normandy had long laid claim, but the Duke shook his head, saying that he must seek no selfish advantage, when called to judge between others.

Richard was rather tired of their grave talk, and thought the supper very long, but at last it was over, the grace was said, the boards which had served for tables were removed, and as it was still light, some of the guests went to see how their steeds had been bestowed, others to look at Sir Eric's horses and hounds, and others collected together in groups.

The Duke had time to attend to his little boy, and Richard sat upon his knee and talked,

ing; and Richard, rather encouraged, went on more boldly. "You do not know this reading, noble father?"

"To my sorrow, no," said the Duke.

"And Sir Eric cannot read, nor Osmond, nor anyone, and why must I read, and cramp my fingers with writing, just as if I was a clerk instead of a young Duke?" Richard looked up in his father's face, and then hung his head, as if half ashamed of questioning his will; but the Duke answered him without displeasure.

"It is hard, no doubt, my boy, to you now, but it will be the better for you in the end. I would give much to be able myself to read those holy books which I must now only hear read to me by a clerk; but since I have had the wish, I have had no time to learn as you have now."

"But Knights and Nobles never learn," said Richard.

"And do you think it a reason they never should? But you are wrong, my boy, for the Kings of France and England, the Counts of Anjou, of Provence, and Paris, yes, even King Hako of Norway¹, can all read.

¹ See note, page 215.

feast upon the Saxon. O, had I been his son, how would I have carried on the feud! How I would have laughed when I cut down the false traitors, and burnt their palaces!" Richard's eye kindled, and his words, as he spoke the old Norse language, flowed into the sort of wild verse in which the Sagas or legendary songs were composed, and which, perhaps, he was unconsciously repeating.

Duke William looked grave.

"Fru Astrida must sing you no more such Sagas," said he, "if they fill your mind with these revengeful thoughts, fit only for the worshippers of Odin and Thor. Neither Ragnar nor his sons knew better than to rejoice in this deadly vengeance, but we, who are Christians, know that it is for us to forgive."

"The English had slain their father!" said Richard, looking up with wondering dissatisfied eyes.

"Yes, Richard, and I speak not against them, for they were even as we should have been, had not King Harold the Fair-haired driven your grandfather from Denmark. They had not been taught the truth, but to us it has been said, 'Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.' Listen to

space, during which he began to revive into playfulness, to stroke the Duke's short curled beard, and play with his embroidered collar.

In so doing his fingers caught hold of a silver chain, and pulling it out with a jerk, he saw a silver key attached to it. "O, what is that?" he asked, eagerly. "What does that key unlock?"

"My greatest treasure," replied Duke William, as he replaced the chain and key within his robe.

"Your greatest treasure, father! Is that your coronet?"

"You will know one day," said his father, putting the little hand down from its too busy investigations; and some of the barons at that moment returning into the hall, he had no more leisure to bestow on his little son.

The next day, after morning service in the chapel, and breakfast in the hall, the Duke again set forward on his journey, giving Richard hopes he might return in a fortnight's time, and obtaining from him a promise that he would be very attentive to Father Lucas, and very obedient to Sir Eric de Centeville.

three large hounds were reposing in front of the hearth, and among them sat little Richard of Normandy, now smoothing down their broad silken ears, now tickling the large cushions of their feet with the end of one of Osmond's feathers, now fairly pulling open the eyes of one of the good-natured sleepy creatures, which only stretched its legs, and remonstrated with a sort of low groan, rather than a growl. The boy's eyes were, all the time, intently fixed on Dame Astrida, as if he would not lose one word of the story she was telling him; how Earl Rollo, his grandfather, had sailed into the mouth of the Seine, and how Archbishop Franco of Rouen had come to meet him, and brought him the keys of the town, and how not one Neustrian of Rouen had met with harm from the brave Northmen. Then she told him of his grandfather's baptism, and how during the seven days that he wore his white baptismal robes, he had made large gifts to all the chief churches in his dukedom of Normandy.

“O, but tell of the paying homage!” said Richard; “and how Sigurd Bloodaxe threw down simple King Charles! Ah! how would I have laughed to see it!”

Stay you here, my Lord," he added, as Richard was running after Osmond; and the little boy obeyed, and stood still, though quivering all over with impatience.

"Tidings from the Duke, I should guess," said Fru Astrida. "It can scarce be himself at such an hour.

"O it must be, dear Fru Astrida!" said Richard. "He said he would come again. Hark, there are horses' feet in the court! I am sure that is his black charger's tread! And I shall not be there to hold his stirrup! O, Sir Eric, let me go."

Sir Eric, always a man of few words, only shook his head, and at that moment steps were heard on the stone stairs. Again Richard was about to spring forward, when Osmond returned, his face showing, at a glance, that something was amiss; but all that he said was, "Count Bernard of Harcourt, and Sir Rainulf de Ferrières," and he stood aside to let them pass.

Richard stood still in the midst of the hall, disappointed. Without greeting to Sir Eric, or to any within the hall, the Count of Harcourt came forward to Richard, bent his knee before him, took his hand, and said with a broken voice

“Even so,” said Rainulf, slowly and sadly, and the silence was only broken by the long-drawn sobs of old Count Bernárd.

“But how? when? where?” broke forth Sir Eric, presently. “There was no note of battle when you went forth. O, why was not I at his side?”

“He fell not in battle,” gloomily replied Sir Rainulf.

“Ha! could sickness cut him down so quickly?”

“It was not sickness,” answered Ferrières. “It was treachery. He fell in the isle of Pecquigny, by the hand of the false Fleming!”

“Lives the traitor yet?” cried the Baron de Centeville, grasping his good sword.

“He lives and rejoices in his crime,” said Ferrières, “safe in his own merchant towns.”

“I can scarce credit you, my Lords!” said Sir Eric. “Our Duke slain, and his enemy safe, and you here to tell the tale!”

“I would I were stark and stiff by my Lord’s side!” said Count Bernard, “but for the sake of Normandy, and of that poor child, who is like to need all that ever were friends to his house. I would that mine eyes had been blinded

Montreuil, but even was for offering to pay homage to our Duke for Flanders itself; but this our William refused, saying it were foul wrong to both King Louis of France, and Kaiser Otho of Germany, to take from them their vassal. They took leave of each other in all courtesy, and we embarked again. It was Duke William's pleasure to go alone in a small boat, while we twelve were together in another. Just as we had nearly reached our own bank, there was a shout from the Flemings that their Count had somewhat further to say to the Duke, and forbidding us to follow him, the Duke turned his boat and went back again. No sooner had he set foot on the isle," proceeded the Norman, clenching his hands and speaking between his teeth, "than we saw one Fleming strike him on the head with an oar; he fell senseless, the rest threw themselves upon him, and the next moment held up their bloody daggers in scorn at us! You may well think how we shouted and yelled at them, and plied our oars like men distracted, but all in vain; they were already in their boats, and ere we could even reach the isle, they were on the other side of the river, mounted their horses,

Trust my word, Count Bernard, our young Duke will be famed as widely as ever were his forefathers!"

"I believe it well!" said Bernard. "He hath the port of his grandfather, Duke Rollo, and much, too, of his noble father! How say you, Lord Richard, will you be a valiant leader of the Norman race against our foes?"

"That I will!" said Richard, carried away by the applause excited by those few words of his. "I will ride at your head this very night if you will but go to chastise the false Flemings."

"You shall ride with us to-morrow, my Lord," answered Bernard, "but it must be to Rouen, there to be invested with your ducal sword and mantle, and to receive the homage of your vassals."

Richard drooped his head without replying, for this seemed to bring to him the perception that his father was really gone, and that he should never see him again. He thought of all his projects for the day of his return, how he had almost counted the hours, and had looked forward to telling him that Father Lucas was well pleased with him! And now he should never nestle into his breast again, never hear

When Richard awoke the next morning, he could hardly believe that all that had passed in the evening was true, but he soon found that it was but too real, and all was prepared for him to go to Rouen with the vassals; indeed, it was for no other purpose than to fetch him that the Count of Harcourt had come to Bayeux.

Fru Astrida was quite unhappy that "the child", as she called him, should go alone with the warriors; but Sir Eric laughed at her, and said that it would never do for the Duke of Normandy to bring his nurse with him in his first entry into Rouen, and she must be content to follow at some space behind, under the escort of Walter, the huntsman.

So she took leave of Richard, charging both Sir Eric and Osmond to have the utmost care of him, and shedding tears as if the parting was to be for a much longer space; he then bade farewell to the servants of the castle, received the blessing of Father Lucas, and, mounting his pony, rode off between Sir Eric and Count Bernard. Richard was but a little boy, and he did not think so much of his loss, as he rode along in the free morning air, feeling himself a Prince at the head of his vassals, his

had nothing to say to such a little boy, and the very respect and formality with which they treated him, made him shrink from them still more, especially from the grim-faced Bernard; and Osmond, his own friend and playfellow, was obliged to ride far behind, as inferior in rank.

They entered the town just as it was growing dark. Count Bernard looked back and arrayed the procession; Eric de Centeville bade Richard sit upright and not look weary, and then all the Knights held back while the little Duke rode alone a little in advance of them through the gateway. There was a loud shout of "Long live the little Duke!" and crowds of people were standing round to gaze upon his entry, so many, that the bag of coins was soon emptied by his largesses. The whole city was like one great castle, shut in by a wall and moat, and with Rollo's Tower rising at one end like the keep of a castle, and it was thither that Richard was turning his horse, when the Count of Harcourt said, "Nay, my Lord, to the Church of Our Lady."¹

It was then considered a duty to be paid

¹ See note, page 215.

guarded space was a bier, and a form lay on it.

Richard trembled still more with awe, and would have paused, but he was obliged to proceed. He dipped his hand in the water of the font, crossed his brow, and came slowly on, sprinkled the remaining drops on the lifeless figure, and then stood still. There was an oppression on his breast as if he could neither breathe nor move.

There lay William of the Long Sword, like a good and true Christian warrior, arrayed in his shining armour, his sword by his side, his shield on his arm, and a cross between his hands, clasped upon his breast. His ducal mantle of crimson velvet, lined with ermine, was round his shoulders, and instead of a helmet, his coronet was on his head; but in contrast with this rich array, over the collar of the hauberk was folded the edge of a rough hair shirt, which the Duke had worn beneath his robes, unknown to all, until his corpse was disrobed of his blood-stained garments. His face looked full of calm solemn peace, as if he had gently fallen asleep, and was only awaiting the great call to awaken. There was not a

The rest was left unspoken, for a hand was laid on his arm. A priest, who had hitherto been kneeling near the head of the corpse, had risen, and stood tall and dark over him, and looking up, he recognized the pale grave countenance of Martin, Abbot of Jumièges, his father's chief friend and counsellor.

"Richard of Normandy, what sayest thou?" said he, sternly. "Yes, hang thy head, and reply not, rather than repeat those words. Dost thou come here to disturb the peace of the dead with clamours for vengeance? Dost thou vow strife and anger on that sword which was never drawn save in the cause of the poor and distressed? Wouldst thou rob Him to whose service thy life has been pledged, and devote thyself to that of His foe? Is this what thou hast learnt from thy blessed father?"

Richard made no answer, but he covered his face with his hands to hide the tears which were fast streaming.

"Lord Abbot, Lord Abbot, this passes!" exclaimed Bernard the Dane. "Our young Lord is no monk, and we will not see each spark of noble and knightly spirit quenched as soon as it shows itself."

"Forgive me!" said Richard, as well as he could speak.

"See there," said the priest, pointing to the large cross over the altar, "thou knowest the meaning of that sacred sign?"

Richard bowed his head in assent and reverence.

"It speaks of forgiveness," continued the Abbot. "And knowest thou who gave that pardon? The Son forgave His murderers; the Father them who slew His Son. And shalt thou call for vengeance?"

"But O!" said Richard, looking up, "must that cruel murderous traitor glory unpunished in his crime, while there lies——" and again his voice was cut off by tears.

"Vengeance shall surely overtake the sinner," said Martin, "the vengeance of the Lord, and in His own good time, but it must not be of thy seeking. Nay, Richard, thou art of all men the most bound to show love and mercy to Arnulf of Flanders. Yes, when the hand of the Lord hath touched him, and bowed him down in punishment for his crime, it is then that thou, whom he hath most deeply injured, shouldst stretch out thine hand to aid him, and receive

CHAPTER III

Duke William of the Long Sword was buried the next morning in high pomp and state, with many a prayer and psalm chanted over his grave.

When this was over, little Richard, who had all the time stood or knelt nearest the corpse, in one dull heavy dream of wonder and sorrow, was led back to the palace, and there his long heavy black garments were taken off, and he was dressed in his short scarlet tunic, his hair was carefully arranged, and then he came down again into the hall, where there was a great assembly of Barons, some in armour, some in long furred gowns, who had all been attending his father's burial. Richard, as he was desired by Sir Eric de Centeville, took off his cap, and bowed low in reply to the reverences with which they all greeted his entrance, and he then slowly crossed the hall, and descended the steps from the door, while they formed into a procession behind him,

circlet of gold, the ducal coronet; and another baron, following him closely, carried a long heavy sword, with a cross handle. The Archbishop of Rouen received both coronet and sword, and laid them on the altar. Then the service proceeded. At that time the rite of confirmation was administered in infancy, and Richard, who had been confirmed by his god-father, the Archbishop of Rouen, immediately after his baptism, knelt in solemn awe to receive the other holy sacrament from his hands, as soon as all the clergy had communicated.

When the administration was over, Richard was led forward to the step of the altar by Count Bernard and Sir Eric, and the Archbishop, laying one hand upon both his, as he held them clasped together, demanded of him in the name of God and of the people of Normandy, whether he would be their good and true ruler, guard them from their foes, maintain truth, punish iniquity, and protect the Church.

“I will!” answered Richard’s young trembling voice, “so help me God!” and he knelt and kissed the book of the Holy Gospels, which the Archbishop offered him.

It was a great and awful oath, and he

was not done without some difficulty, encumbered as he was; but Osmond held up the train of his mantle, Sir Eric kept the coronet on his head, and he himself held fast and lovingly the sword, though the Count of Harcourt offered to carry it for him. He was lifted up to his throne, and then came the paying him homage. Alan, Duke of Brittany, was the first to kneel before him, and, with his hand between those of the Duke, he swore to be his man, to obey him, and pay him feudal service for his dukedom of Brittany. In return, Richard swore to be his good lord, and to protect him from all his foes. Then followed Bernard the Dane, and many another, each repeating the same formulay, as their large rugged hands were clasped within those little soft fingers. Many a kind and loving eye was bent in compassion on the orphan child; many a strong voice faltered with earnestness as it pronounced the vow, and many a brave stalwart heart heaved with grief for the murdered father, and tears flowed down the war-worn cheeks which had met the fiercest storms of the northern ocean, as the vassals bent before the young fatherless boy, whom they

a look between friendliness and respect, up into the little Duke's gazing face. Richard listened eagerly for his name, and was refreshed at the sound of the boyish voice that pronounced, "I, Alberic de Montémar, am thy liegeman and vassal for my castle and barony of Montémar sur Epte."

When Alberic moved away, Richard followed him with his eye as far as he could to his place in the Cathedral, and was taken by surprise when he found the next baron kneeling before him.

The ceremony of homage came to an end at last, and Richard would fain have run all the way to the palace to shake off his weariness, but he was obliged to head the procession again; and even when he reached the castle hall his toils were not over, for there was a great state banquet spread out, and he had to sit in the high chair where he remembered climbing on his father's knee last Christmas-day, all the time that the barons feasted round, and held grave converse. Richard's best comfort all this time was in watching Osmond de Centeville and Alberic de Montémar, who, with the other youths who were not yet

helplessness, and should that be, remember that thou hast no surer friend than Alan of Brittany. Fare thee well, my young Duke!"

"Farewell, sir!" said Richard, willingly giving his hand to be shaken by his kind vassal, and watching him as Sir Eric attended him from the hall.

"Fair words, but I trust not the Breton," muttered Bernard; "hatred is deeply ingrained in them."

"He should know what the Frank king is made of," said Rainulf de Ferrières, "he was bred up with him in the days when they were both exiles at the court of King Ethelstane of England."

"Aye, and thanks to Duke William, that either Louis or Alan are not exiles still. Now we shall see whose gratitude is worth most, the Frank's or the Breton's; I suspect the Norman valour will be the best to trust to."

"Yes, and how will Norman valour prosper without treasure? Who knows what gold is in the Duke's coffers?"

There was some consultation here in a low voice, and the next thing Richard heard dis-

the lock turned, and the chest was opened. The Normans pressed eagerly to see their Duke's greatest treasure.

It was a robe of serge, and a pair of sandals, such as were worn in the Abbey of Jumièges.

"Ha! is this all? What didst say, child?" cried Bernard the Dane, hastily.

"He told me it was his greatest treasure," repeated Richard.

"And it was!" said Abbot Martin.

Then the good Abbot told them the history, part of which was already known to some of them. About five or six years before, Duke William had been hunting in the forest of Jumièges, when he had suddenly come on the ruins of the Abbey, which had been wasted thirty or forty years previously, by the Sea-King, Hasting. Two old monks, of the original brotherhood, still survived, and came forth to greet the Duke, and offer him their hospitality.

"Aye!" said Bernard, "well do I remember their bread; we asked if it was made of fir-bark, like that of our brethren of Norway."

William, then an eager thoughtless young man, turned with disgust from this wretched

read holy books; and he felt his temporal affairs, and the state and splendour of his rank so great a temptation, that he had one day come to the Abbot, and entreated to be allowed to lay them aside, and become a brother of the order. But Martin had refused to receive his vows. He had told him that he had no right to neglect or forsake the duties of the station which God had appointed him; that it would be a sin to leave the post which had been given him to defend; and that the way marked out for him to serve God was by doing justice among his people, and using his power to defend the right. Not till he had done his allotted work, and his son was old enough to take his place as ruler of the Normans, might he cease from his active duties, quit the turmoil of the world, and seek the repose of the cloister. It was in this hope of peaceful retirement, that William had delighted to treasure up the humble garments that he hoped one day to wear in peace and holiness.

“And O, my noble Duke!” exclaimed Abbot Martin, bursting into tears, as he finished his narration, “the Lord hath been very gracious unto thee. He has taken thee home

CHAPTER IV

Richard of Normandy was very anxious to know more of the little boy whom he had seen among his vassals.

"Ah! the young Baron de Montémar," said Sir Eric. "I knew his father well, and a brave man he was, though not of northern blood. He was warden of the marches of the Epte, and was killed by your father's side in the inroad of the Viscount du Cotentin, at the time when you were born, Lord Richard."

"But where does he live? Shall I not see him again?"

"Montémar is on the bank of the Epte, in the domain that the French wrongfully claim from us. He lives there with his mother, and if he be not yet returned, you shall see him presently. Osmond, go you and seek out the lodging of the young Montémar, and tell him the Duke would see him."

Richard had never had a playfellow of his

For some minutes the little Duke and the young Baron stood surveying each other without a word, and old Sir Eric did not improve matters by saying, "Well, Lord Duke, here he is. Have you no better greeting for him?"

"The children are shamefaced," said Fru Astrida, seeing how they both coloured. "Is your Lady mother in good health, my young sir?"

Alberic blushed more deeply, bowed to the old northern lady, and answered fast and low in French, "I cannot speak the Norman tongue."

Richard, glad to say something, interpreted Fru Astrida's speech, and Alberic readily made courteous reply that his mother was well, and he thanked the Dame de Centeville, a French title which sounded new to Fru Astrida's ears. Then came the embarrassment again, and Fru Astrida at last said, "Take him out, Lord Richard, take him to see the horses in the stables, or the hounds, or what not."

Richard was not sorry to obey, so out they went into the court of Rollo's Tower, and in the open air the shyness went off. Richard showed his own pony, and Alberic asked if he could leap

stone stairs to the battlements at the top of the tower, where they looked at the house-tops of Rouen close beneath, and the river Seine, broadening and glittering on one side in its course to the sea, and on the other narrowing to a blue ribbon winding through the green expanse of fertile Normandy. They threw the pebbles and bits of mortar down that they might hear them fall, and tried which could stand nearest to the edge of the battlement without being giddy. Richard was pleased to find that he could go the nearest, and began to tell some of Fru Astrida's stories about the precipices of Norway, among which when she was a young girl she used to climb about and tend the cattle in the long light summertime. When the two boys came down again into the hall to dinner they felt as if they had known each other all their lives. The dinner was laid out in full state, and Richard had, as before, to sit in the great throne-like chair, with the old Count of Harcourt on one side, but, to his comfort, Fru Astrida was on the other.

After the dinner, Alberic de Montémar rose to take his leave, as he was to ride halfway to his home that afternoon. Count Bernard,

while he said, "I had rather not stay here."

"Ha! not to do service to your Lord?"

"I would serve him with all my heart, but I do not want to stay here. I love the Castle of Montémar better, and my mother has no one but me."

"Brave and true, Sir Frenchman," said the old Count, laying his great hand on Alberic's head, and looking better pleased than Richard thought his grim features could have appeared. Then turning to Bertrand, Alberic's seneschal, he said, "Bear the Count de Harcourt's greetings to the noble Dame de Montémar, and say to her that her son is of a free bold spirit, and if she would have him bred up with my Lord Duke, as his comrade and brother in arms, he will find a ready welcome."

"So, Alberic, you will come back perhaps?" said Richard.

"That must be as my mother pleases," answered Alberic bluntly, and with all due civilities he and his seneschal departed.

Four or five times a day did Richard ask Osmond and Fru Astrida if they thought Alberic would return, and it was a great satisfaction to him to find that everyone agreed that it would

up, missed his mother less, managed to talk something between French and Norman to Sir Eric and Fru Astrida, and became a very animated companion and friend. In one respect Alberic was a better playfellow for the Duke than Osmond de Centeville, for Osmond, playing as a grown-up man, not for his own amusement, but the child's, had left all the advantages of the game to Richard, who was growing not a little inclined to domineer. This Alberic did not like, unless, as he said, "it was to be always Lord and vassal, and then he did not care for the game," and he played with so little animation that Richard grew vexed.

"I can't help it," said Alberic; "if you take all the best chances to yourself, 'tis no sport for me. I will do your bidding, as you are the Duke, but I cannot like it."

"Never mind my being Duke, but play as we used to do."

"Then let us play as I did with Bertrand's sons at Montémar. I was their Baron, as you are my Duke, but my mother said there would be no sport unless we forgot all that at play."

"Then so we will. Come, begin again, Alberic, and you shall have the first turn."

of state, and hearing, rather than listening to, questions about the repairing and guarding of castles, the asking of loans from the vassals, the appeals from the Barons of the Exchequer, who were then nobles sent through the duchy to administer justice, and the discussions about the proceedings of his neighbours, King Louis of France, Count Foulques of Anjou, and Count Herluin of Montreuil, and how far the friendship of Hugh of Paris, and Alan of Brittany might be trusted.

Very tired of all this did Richard grow, especially when he found that the Normans had made up their minds not to attempt a war against the wicked Count of Flanders. He sighed most wearily, yawned again and again, and moved restlessly about in his chair; but whenever Count Bernard saw him doing so, he received so severe a look and sign that he grew perfectly to dread the eye of the fierce old Dane. Bernard never spoke to him to praise him, or to enter into any of his pursuits; he only treated him with the grave distant respect due to him as a prince, or else now and then spoke a few stern words to him of reproof for this restlessness, or for some other childish folly.

"It must import something extraordinary," proceeded Osmond. "It is a mischance that the Count of Harcourt is not at Rouen just now."

Richard thought this no mischance at all, and just then Alberic, who had run on a little before, came back exclaiming, "They are French. It is the Frank tongue, not the Norman, that they speak."

"So please you, my Lord," said Osmond, stopping short, "we go not rashly into the midst of them. I would I knew what were best to do."

Osmond rubbed his forehead and stood considering, while the two boys looked at him anxiously. In a few seconds, before he had come to any conclusion, there came forth from the gate a Norman squire, accompanied by two strangers.

"My Lord Duke," said he to Richard, in French, "Sir Eric has sent me to bring you tidings that the King of France has arrived to receive your homage."

"The King!" exclaimed Osmond.

"Aye!" proceeded the Norman, in his own tongue, "Louis himself, and with a train looking

him, and he was conversing with the Archbishop, who, as well as Sir Eric, cast several anxious glances at the little Duke as he advanced up the hall. He came up to the King, put his knee to the ground, and was just beginning, "Louis, King of France, I—" when he found himself suddenly lifted from the ground in the King's arms, and kissed on both cheeks. Then, setting him on his knee, the King exclaimed, "And is this the son of my brave and noble friend, Duke William? Ah! I should have known it from his likeness! Let me embrace you again, dear child, for your father's sake!"

Richard was rather overwhelmed, but he thought the King very kind, especially when Louis began to admire his height and free-spirited bearing, and to lament that his own sons, Lothaire and Carloman, were so much smaller and more backward. He caressed Richard again and again, praised every word he said—Fru Astrida was nothing to him; and Richard began to say to himself how strange and unkind it was of Bernard de Harcourt to like to find fault with him, when on the contrary he deserved all this praise from the King himself.

Osmond," he said. "It is well to be on the alert, for peril enough is around him—the Frank means mischief! I know from a sure hand that Arnulf of Flanders was in counsel with him just before he came hither, with his false tongue, wiling and coaxing the poor child!"

"Ungrateful traitor!" murmured Osmond. "Do you guess his purpose?"

"Yes, surely, to carry the boy off with him, and so he trusts doubtless to cut off all the race of Rollo! I know his purpose is to bear off the Duke, as a ward of the crown, forsooth. Did you not hear him luring the child with his promises of friendship with the princes? I could not understand all his French words, but I saw it plain enough."

"You will never allow it?"

"If he does, it must be across our dead bodies; but taken as we are by surprise, our resistance will little avail. The castle is full of French, the hall and court swarm with them. Even if we could draw our Normans together, we should not be more than a dozen men, and what could we do but die. That we are ready for, if it may not be otherwise, rather than let our charge be thus borne off without a pledge.

Thibault, who would soon find man and horse to send after the Count."

"Ha! let me see!" said Sir Eric. "It might be. But how is he to get out?"

"I know a way," said Alberic. "I scrambled down that wide buttress by the east wall last week, when our ball was caught in a branch of the ivy. And the drawbridge is down."

"If Bernard knew, it would be off my mind at least," said Sir Eric. "Well, my young Frenchman, you may do good service."

"Osmond," whispered Alberic, as he began hastily to dress himself, "only ask one thing of Sir Eric, never to call me young Frenchman again."

Sir Eric smiled, saying, "Prove yourself Norman, my boy."

"Then," added Osmond, "if it were possible to get the Duke himself out of the castle to-morrow morning. If I could take him forth by the postern, and once bring him into the town, he would be safe. It would be only to raise the burghers, or else to take refuge in the Church of Our Lady till the Count came up, and then Louis would find his prey out of his hands when he awoke and sought him."

was not much more than twice his own height, and the wall was so covered with ivy that it was not a very dangerous feat for an active boy, so that Alberic was soon safe on the ground; then, looking up to wave his cap, he ran on along the side of the moat, and was soon lost to Osmond's sight in the darkness.

Osmond returned to the Duke's chamber, and relieved his father's guard, while Richard slept soundly on, little guessing at the plots of his enemies, or at the schemes of his faithful subjects for his protection.

Osmond thought this all the better, for he had small trust in Richard's patience and self-command, and thought there was much more chance of getting him unnoticed out of the castle, if he did not know how much depended on it, and how dangerous his situation was.

When Richard awoke, he was much surprised at missing Alberic, but Osmond said he was gone into the town to Thibault the armourer, and this was a message on which he was so likely to be employed, that Richard's suspicion was not excited. All the time he was dressing he talked about the King, and everything he meant to show him that day; then when he

The men-at-arms looked at each other, and guarded the door more closely. Osmond saw it was hopeless, and only wanted to draw his young charge back without being recognized, but Richard exclaimed loudly, "What means this?"

"The King has given orders that none should pass without warrant," was Osmond's answer. "We must wait."

"I will pass!" said Richard, impatient at opposition to which he was little accustomed. "What mean you, Osmond? This is my castle, and no one has a right to stop me. Do you hear, grooms, let me go. I am the Duke!"

The sentinels bowed, but all they said was, "Our orders are express."

"I tell you I am Duke of Normandy, and I will go where I please in my own city!" exclaimed Richard, passionately pressing against the crossed staves of the weapons, to force his way between them, but he was caught and held fast in the powerful gauntlet of one of the men-at-arms. "Let me go, villain!" cried he, struggling with all his might. "Osmond, Osmond, help!"

Even as he spoke, Osmond had disengaged

by him, Osmond following closely, up the stairs, up a second and a third winding flight, still narrower, and with broken steps, to a small round thick-walled turret chamber, with an extremely small door, and loopholes of windows, high up in the tower. Here, to his great surprise, he found Dame Astrida, kneeling and telling her beads, two or three of her maidens, and about four of the Norman squires and men-at-arms.

“So you have failed, Osmond?” said the Baron.

“But what is all this? How did Fru Astrida come up here? May I not go to the King and have those insolent Franks punished?”

“Listen to me, Lord Richard,” said Sir Eric; “that smooth-spoken King whose words so charmed you last night is an ungrateful deceiver. The Franks have always hated and feared the Normans, and not being able to conquer us fairly, they now take to foul means. Louis came hither from Flanders, he has brought this great troop of French to surprise us, claim you as a ward of the crown, and carry you away with him to some prison of his own.”

“You will not let me go,” said Richard.

"Hark!" said Osmond, "what a tramping the Franks are making! They are beginning to wonder where the Duke is."

"To the stairs, Osmond!" said Sir Eric. "On that narrow step one man may keep them at bay, a long time. You can speak their jargon too, and hold parley with them."

"Perhaps they will think I am gone," whispered Richard, "if they cannot find me, and go away."

Osmond and two of the Normans were, as he spoke, taking their stand on the narrow spiral stair, where there was just room for one man on the step; Osmond was the lowest, the other two above him, and it would have been very hard for an enemy to force his way past them.

Osmond could plainly hear the sounds of the steps and voices of the French as they consulted together, and sought for the Duke. A man at length was heard clanking up these very stairs, till, winding round, he suddenly found himself close upon young de Centeville.

"Ha, Norman!" he cried, starting back in amazement, "what are you doing here?"

"My duty," answered Osmond shortly. "I

your own rebel hands. You had best yield; it will be the better for you and for him. The child is the King's ward, and he shall not be left to be nurtured in rebellion by northern pirates."

At this moment a cry from without arose, so loud as almost to drown the voices of the speakers on the turret stair, a cry welcome to the ears of Osmond, repeated by a multitude of voices, "Haro! Haro! our little Duke!"

It was well known as a Norman shout. So just and so ready to redress all grievances had the old Duke Rollo been, that his very name was an appeal against injustice, and whenever wrong was done, the Norman outcry against the injury was always "Ha, Rollo!" or as it had become shortened, "Haro!" And now Osmond knew that those, whose affection had been won by the uprightness of Rollo, were gathering to protect his helpless grandchild.

The cry was likewise heard by the little garrison in the turret chamber, bringing hope and joy. Richard thought himself already rescued, and springing from Fru Astrida, danced about in ecstasy, only longing to see

with as many as you choose to bring with you. He declares on the faith of a free baron that the King has no thought of ill—he wants to show him to the Rouennais without, who are calling for him, and threaten to tear down the tower rather than not see their little Duke. Shall I bid him send a hostage?"

"Answer him," returned the Baron, "that the Duke leaves not this chamber unless a pledge is put into our hands for his safety. There was an oily-tongued Count, who sat next the King at supper—let him come hither, and then perchance I may trust the Duke among them."

Osmond gave the desired reply, which was carried to the King. Meantime the uproar outside grew louder than ever, and there were new sounds, a horn was winded, and there was a shout of "Dieu aide!" the Norman war-cry, joined with "Notre Dame de Harcourt!"

"There, there!" cried Sir Eric, with a long breath, as if relieved of half his anxieties, "the boy has sped well. Bernard is here at last! now his head and hand are there, I doubt no longer."

which was above the hall. There the King was walking up and down anxiously, looking paler than his wont, and no wonder, for the uproar sounded tremendous there, and now and then a stone dashed against the sides of the deep window.

Nearly at the same moment as Richard entered by one door, Count Bernard de Harcourt came in from the other, and there was a slight lull in the tumult.

“What means this, my Lords?” exclaimed the King; “here am I come in all goodwill, in memory of my warm friendship with Duke William, to take on me the care of his orphan, and hold counsel with you for avenging his death, and is this the greeting you afford me? You steal away the child, and stir up the rascaille of Rouen against me. Is this the reception for your King?”

“Sir King,” replied Bernard, “what your intentions may be, I know not. All I do know is, that the burghers of Rouen are fiercely incensed against you, so much so, that they were almost ready to tear me to pieces for being absent at this juncture. They say that you are keeping the child prisoner in his own castle,

court, who shook his head, and muttered in his own tongue, "I will do all I may, but our force is small, and the King has the best of it. We must not yet bring a war on ourselves."

"Hark! he is going to speak," said Osmond.

"Fair Sirs, excellent burgesses," began the King, as the cries lulled a little, "I rejoice to see the love ye bear to your young prince—I would all my subjects were equally loyal. But wherefore dread me as if I were come to injure him? I, who came but to take counsel how to avenge the death of his father, who brought me back from England when I was a friendless exile. Know ye not how deep is the debt of gratitude I owe to Duke William. He it was who made me King; it was he who gained me the love of the King of Germany; he stood godfather for my son; to him I owe all my wealth and state, and all my care is to render guerdon for it to his child, since, alas! I may not to himself! Duke William rests in his bloody grave; it is for me to call his murderers to account, and to cherish his son even as mine own!"

So saying, Louis tenderly embraced the little boy, and the Rouennais below broke out into

cases. The priests were followed by a few of the Norman knights and nobles, some of the burgesses of Rouen, and to Richard's great joy, by Alberic de Montémar himself. The two boys stood looking eagerly at each other, while preparation was made for the ceremony of the King's oath.

The stone table in the middle of the room was cleared and arranged so as in some degree to resemble the altar in the cathedral, then the Count de Harcourt, standing before it and holding the King's hand, demanded of him whether he would undertake to be the friend, protector, and good lord of Richard Duke of Normandy, guarding him from all his enemies, and ever seeking his welfare. Louis, with his hand on the Gospels, "swore that so he would".

"Amen!" returned Bernard the Dane, solemnly, "and as thou keepest that oath to the fatherless child, so may the Lord do unto thine house!"

Then followed the ceremony which had been interrupted the night before, of the homage and oath of allegiance which Richard owed to the King, and on the other hand the King's formal reception of him as a vassal holding under

mandy and Brittany who can draw a sword, or bend a bow, will stand forth in the cause of our little Duke; aye, and that his blessed father's memory is held so dear in our northern home, that it needs but a message to King Harald Blue-tooth to bring a fleet of long keels into the Seine with stout Danes enough to carry fire and sword, not merely through Flanders, but through all France. We of the north are not apt to forget old friendships and favours, Sir King."

"Yes, yes, I know the Norman faith of old," returned Louis uneasily, "but we should scarcely need such wild allies as you propose; the Count of Paris and Hubert of Senlis may be reckoned on, I suppose?"

"No truer friend to Normandy than gallant and wise old Hugh the White!" said Bernard; "and as to Senlis, he is uncle to the boy, and doubly bound to us."

"I rejoice to see your confidence," said Louis. "You shall soon hear from me. In the meantime I must return to gather my force together, and summon my great vassals, and I will, with your leave, brave Normans, take with me my dear young ward. His presence will plead

his hands, it would not be without a fierce struggle, wherein you might be harmed, and this castle and town certainly burnt, and wrested from us. A few weeks or months, and we shall have time to draw our force together, so that Normandy need fear no man, and for that time you must tarry with him."

"Must I—and all alone?"

"No, not alone, not without the most trusty guardian that can be found for you. Friend Eric, what say you?" and he laid his hand on the old Baron's shoulder. "Yet I know not; true thou art as a Norwegian mountain, but I doubt me if thy brains are not too dull to see through the French wiles and disguises, sharp as thou didst show thyself last night."

"That was Osmond, not I," said Sir Eric. "He knows their mincing tongue better than I. He were the best to go with the poor child, if go he must."

"Bethink you, Eric," said the Count in an undertone, "Osmond is the only hope of your good old house—if there is foul play, the guardian will be the first to suffer."

"Since you think fit to peril the only hope of all Normandy, I am not the man to hold back

bringing her hostage with her. She wept much over her little Duke, praying that he might be restored safe to Normandy, even though she might not live to see it; she exhorted him not to forget the good and holy learning in which he had been brought up, to rule his temper, and, above all, to say his prayers constantly, never leaving out one, as the beads of his rosary reminded him of their order. As to her own grandson, anxiety for him seemed almost lost in her fears for Richard; and the chief things she said to him, when he came to take leave of her, were directions as to the care he was to take of the child, telling him the honour he now received was one which would make his name for ever esteemed if he did but fulfil his trust, the most precious that Norman had ever yet received.

“I will, grandmother, to the very best of my powers,” said Osmond; “I may die in his cause, but never will I be faithless!”

“Alberic!” said Richard, “are you glad to be going back to Montémar?”

“Yes, my Lord,” answered Alberic sturdily, “as glad as you will be to come back to Rouen.”

“Then I shall send for you directly, Alberic,

CHAPTER VI

Away from the tall narrow gateway of Rollo's Tower, with the cluster of friendly sorrowful faces looking forth from it, away from the booth-like shops of Rouen, and the stout burghers shouting with all the power of their lungs, "Long live Duke Richard! Long live King Louis! Death to the Fleming!"—away from the broad Seine—away from home and friends rode the young Duke of Normandy, by the side of the palfrey of the King of France.

The King took much notice of him, kept him by his side, talked to him, admired the beautiful cattle grazing in security in the green pastures, and as he looked at the rich dark brown earth of the fields, the castles towering above the woods, the convents looking like great farms, the many villages round the rude churches, and the numerous population who came out to gaze at the party, and repeat the cry of, "Long live

The Baron of the castle received them with great respect to the King, but without paying much attention to the Duke of Normandy, and Richard did not find the second place left for him at the board. He coloured violently, and looked first at the King, and then at Osmond, but Osmond held up his finger in warning; he remembered how he had lost his temper before, and what had come of it, and resolved to try to bear it better; and just then the Baron's daughter, a gentle-looking maiden of fifteen or sixteen, came and spoke to him, and entertained him so well, that he did not think much more of his offended dignity.

When they set off on their journey again, the Baron and several of his followers came with them to show the only safe way across the morass, and a very slippery, treacherous, quaking road it was, where the horses' feet left pools of water wherever they trod. The King and the Baron rode together, and the other French nobles closed round them; Richard was left quite in the background, and though the French men-at-arms took care not to lose sight of him, no one offered him any assistance, excepting Osmond, who, giving his own horse to Sibald, one of the

It was pretty much the same through the whole journey, waste lands, marshes, and forests alternated. The castles stood on high mounds, frowning on the country round, and villages were clustered round them, where the people either fled away, driving off their cattle with them at the first sight of an armed band, or else, if they remained, proved to be thin wretched-looking creatures, with wasted limbs, aguish faces, and often iron collars round their necks. Wherever there was anything of more prosperous appearance, such as a few cornfields, vineyards on the slopes of the hills, fat cattle, and peasantry looking healthy and secure, there was sure to be seen a range of long low stone buildings, surmounted with crosses, with a short square church tower rising in the midst, and interspersed with gnarled hoary old apple trees, or with gardens of pot-herbs spreading before them to the meadows. If, instead of two or three men-at-arms from a castle, or of some trembling serf pressed into the service, and beaten, threatened, and watched to prevent treachery, the King asked for a guide at a convent, some lay brother would take his staff, or else mount an ass, and proceed in perfect confidence and security as to

Normandy!" ushered him up to the dais or raised part of the floor, where the King and Queen stood together talking. The Queen looked round, as Richard was announced, and he saw her face, which was sallow and with a sharp sour expression that did not please him, and he backed and looked reluctant, while Osmond, with a warning hand pressed on his shoulder, was trying to remind him that he ought to go forward, kneel on one knee, and kiss her hand.

"There he is," said the King.

"One thing secure!" said the Queen. "But what makes that northern giant keep close to his heels?"

Louis answered something in a low voice, and, in the meantime, Osmond tried in a whisper to induce his young Lord to go forward and perform his obeisance.

"I tell you I will not," said Richard. "She looks cross, and I do not like her."

Luckily he spoke his own language; but his look and air expressed a good deal of what he said, and Gerberge looked all the more unattractive.

"A thorough little Norwegian bear," said the King, "fierce and unruly as the rest. Come

him. At last, just as the supper had been served up, a side door opened, and the seneschal called, "Place for the high and mighty Princes, my Lord Lothaire and my Lord Carloman!" and in walked two boys, one about the same age as Richard, the other rather more than a year younger. They were both thin, pale, sharp-featured children, and Richard drew himself up to his full height with great satisfaction, at being so much taller than Lothaire.

They came up ceremoniously to their father and kissed his hand, while he kissed their foreheads, and then said to them, "There is a new playfellow for you."

"Is that the little Northman?" said Carloman, turning to stare at Richard with a look of curiosity, while Richard in his turn felt considerably affronted that a boy so much less than himself should call him little.

"Yes," said the Queen, "your father has brought him home with him."

Carloman stepped forward, shyly holding out his hand to the stranger, but his brother pushed him rudely aside, "I am the eldest; it is my business to be first. So, young Northman, you are come here for us to play with."

back to his mother. She meanwhile was saying, "So strong, so rough the young savage is, he will surely harm our poor boys!"

"Never fear," said Louis, "he shall be watched. And," he added in a lower tone, "for the present at least, we must keep up appearances. Hubert of Senlis, and Hugh of Paris, have their eyes on us, and were the boy to be missed, the grim old Harcourt would have all the pirates of his land on us in the twinkling of an eye. We have him, and there we must rest content for the present. Now to supper."

At supper Richard sat next little Carloman, who peeped at him every now and then from under his eyelashes, as if he was afraid of him; and presently, when there was a good deal of talking going on, so that his voice could not be heard, half whispered in a very grave tone, "Do you like salt beef or fresh?"

"I like fresh," answered Richard, with equal gravity, "only we eat salt all the winter."

There was another silence, and then Carloman, with the same solemnity, asked, "How old are you?"

"I shall be nine on the eve of St. Boniface. How old are you?"

"I told you, because he hit Lothaire."

"Well, but did not he laugh, and say it was nothing? Alberic quite knocked me down with a great snowball the other day, and Sir Eric laughed, and said I must stand firmer."

"Do you make snowballs?"

"To be sure I do. Do not you?"

"O no, the snow is so cold!"

"Ah! you are but a little boy," said Richard in a superior manner. Carloman asked how it was done; and Richard gave an animated description of the snowballing, a fortnight ago at Rouen, when Osmond and some of the other young men built a snow fortress, and defended it against Richard, Alberic, and the other squires. Carloman listened with delight, and declared that next time it snowed, they would have a snow castle; and thus by the time supper was over, the two little boys were very good friends.

Bedtime came not long after supper. Richard's was a smaller room than he had been used to at Rouen; but it amazed him exceedingly when he first went into it; he stood gazing in wonder, because, as he said, "It was as if he had been in a church."

"Yes, truly!" said Osmond. "No wonder

King, the glazing of Laon was not permanent; it consisted of casements, which could be put up or removed at pleasure, for as the court possessed only one set of glass windows, they were taken down and carried from place to place, as often as Louis removed from Rheims to Soissons, Laon, or any of his other royal castles; so that Osmond did not find much difficulty in displacing them, and letting in the sharp cold wintry breeze. The next thing he did was to give his young Lord a lecture on his want of courtesy, telling him that no wonder the Franks thought he had no more culture than a Viking (or pirate), fresh caught from Norway. A fine notion he was giving them of the training he had at Centeville, if he could not even show common civility to the Queen, a lady! Was that the way Alberic had behaved when he came to Rouen?

“Fru Astrida did not make sour faces at him, nor call him a young savage,” replied Richard.

“No, and he gave her no reason to do so; he knew that the first teaching of a young Knight is to be courteous to ladies, never mind whether fair and young, or old and foul of favour. Till you learn and note that, Lord Richard, you will never be worthy of your golden spurs.”

now was I, Osmond? Don't you remember?"

"Come, Lord Richard, I cannot let you wait to remember everything; tell your beads, and pray that we may be brought safe back to Rouen; and that you may not forget all the good that Father Lucas and holy Abbot Martin have laboured to teach you."

So Richard told the beads of his rosary—black polished wood, with amber at certain spaces—he repeated a prayer with every bead, and Osmond did the same, then the little Duke put himself into a narrow crib of richly carved walnut; while Osmond, having stuck his dagger so as to form an additional bolt to secure the door, and examined the hangings that no secret entrance might be concealed behind them, gathered a heap of rushes together, and lay down on them, wrapped in his mantle, across the doorway. The Duke was soon asleep; but the squire lay long awake, musing on the possible dangers that surrounded his charge, and on the best way of guarding against them.

some rebuke, which, it must be confessed, Richard often deserved.

As to the boys, his constant companions, Richard was on very friendly terms with Carlonman, a gentle, timid, weakly child. Richard looked down upon him, but he was kind, as a generous-tempered boy could not fail to be, to one younger and weaker than himself. He was so much kinder than Lothaire, that Carlonman was fast growing very fond of him, and looked up to his strength and courage as something noble and marvellous.

It was very different with Lothaire, the person from whom, above all others, Richard would have most expected to meet with affection, as his father's godson, a relationship which in those times was thought almost as near as kindred by blood. Lothaire had been brought up by an indulgent mother, and by courtiers who never ceased flattering him, as the heir to the crown, and he had learnt to think that to give way to his naturally imperious and violent disposition was the way to prove his power and assert his rank. He had always had his own way, and nothing had ever been done to check his faults; somewhat weakly health had made him fretful

“Shame on you, shame on you, for thinking of such an unkingly deed!”

“Shame on me! Do you know to whom you speak, master savage?” cried Lothaire, red with passion.

“I know who is the savage now!” said Richard. “Hold!” to the servant who was bringing the red-hot irons in a pair of tongs.

“Hold?” exclaimed Lothaire. “No one commands here but me and my father. Go on, Charlot—where is the bird? Keep her fast, Giles.”

“Osmond! You I can command——”

“Come away, my Lord,” said Osmond, interrupting Richard’s order before it was issued. “We have no right to interfere here, and cannot hinder it. Come away from such a foul sight.”

“Shame on you too, Osmond, to let such a deed be done without hindering it!” exclaimed Richard, breaking from him, and rushing on the man who carried the hot irons. The French servants were not very willing to exert their strength against the Duke of Normandy, and Richard’s onset, taking the man by surprise, made him drop the tongs. Lothaire, both afraid and enraged, caught them up as a

down, Osmond; what are you doing with me?"

"Saving you from your—— no, I cannot call it folly—I would hardly have had you stand still to see such—— but let me see your face."

"It is nothing. I don't care now the hawk is safe," said Richard, though he could hardly keep his lips in order, and was obliged to wink very hard with his eyes to keep the tears out, now that he had leisure to feel the smarting; but it would have been far beneath a Northman to complain, and he stood bearing it gallantly, and pinching his fingers tightly together, while Osmond knelt down to examine the hurt. "'Tis not much," said he, talking to himself, "half bruise, half burn—I wish my grandmother was here—however, it can't last long! 'Tis right, you bear it like a little Berserker, and it is no bad thing that you should have a scar to show, that they may not be able to say you did *all* the damage."

"Will it always leave a mark?" said Richard. "I am afraid they will call me Richard of the scarred cheek, when we get back to Normandy."

"Never mind if they do—it will not be a mark to be ashamed of, even if it does last, which I do not believe it will."

in striking the heir of France? I might imprison you this instant in a dungeon, where you would never see the light of day."

"Then Bernard de Harcourt would come and set me free," fearlessly answered Richard.

"Do you bandy words with me, child? Ask Prince Lothaire's pardon instantly, or you shall rue it.

"I have done nothing to ask his pardon for. It would have been cruel and cowardly in me to let him put out the poor hawk's eyes," said Richard, with a Northman's stern contempt for pain, disdaining to mention his own burnt cheek, which indeed the king might have seen plainly enough.

"Hawk's eyes!" repeated the King. "Speak the truth, Sir Duke; do not add slander to your other faults."

"I have spoken the truth—I always speak it!" cried Richard. "Whoever says otherwise lies in his throat!"

Osmond here hastily interfered, and desired permission to tell the whole story. The hawk was a valuable bird, and Louis's face darkened when he heard what Lothaire had purposed, for the Prince had, in telling his own story,

displeasure. Osmond, in the meantime, took Richard to recommence bathing his face, and presently Carloman ran out to pity him, wonder at him for not crying, and say he was glad the poor hawk had escaped.

The cheek continued inflamed and painful for some time, and there was a deep scar long after the pain had ceased, but Richard thought little of it after the first, and would have scorned to bear ill-will to Lothaire for the injury.

Lothaire left off taunting Richard with his Norman accent, and calling him a young Sea-King; he had felt his strength, and was afraid of him; but he did not like him the better—he never played with him willingly—scowled, and looked dark and jealous if his father, or if any of the great nobles took the least notice of the little Duke, and whenever he was out of hearing, talked against him with all his natural spitefulness.

Richard liked Lothaire quite as little, contemning almost equally his cowardly ways and his imperious disposition. Since he had been Duke, Richard had been somewhat inclined to grow imperious himself, though always kept under restraint by Fru Astrida's good training,

when they were grown up, and Richard was ruling Normandy—perhaps go to the Holy Land together, and slaughter an unheard-of host of giants and dragons on the way. In the meantime, however, poor Carloman gave small promise of being able to perform great exploits, for he was very small for his age, and often ailing; soon tired, and never able to bear much rough play. Richard, who had never had any reason to learn to forbear, did not at first understand this, and made Carloman cry several times with his roughness and violence, but this always vexed him so much that he grew careful to avoid such things for the future, and gradually learnt to treat his poor little weakly friend with a gentleness and patience at which Osmond used to marvel, and which he would hardly have been taught in his prosperity at home.

Between Carloman and Osmond he was thus tolerably happy at Laon, but he missed his own dear friends and the loving greetings of his vassals, and longed earnestly to be at Rouen, asking Osmond almost every night when they should go back, to which Osmond could only answer that he must pray that Heaven would be pleased to bring them home safely.

a disaster that had chanced in a boyish quarrel. Louis, in fact, was uneasy, and appeared to be watching the Count of Paris the whole time of his visit, so as to prevent him from having any conversation in private with the other great vassals assembled at the court. Hugh did not seem to perceive this, and acted as if he was entirely at his ease, but at the same time he watched his opportunity. One evening after supper he came up to the window where Richard and Carloman were, as usual, deep in story-telling; he sat down on the stone seat, and taking Richard on his knee, he asked if he had any greetings for the Count de Harcourt.

How Richard's face lighted up! "O Sir," he cried, "are you going to Normandy?"

"Not yet, my boy, but it may be that I may have to meet old Harcourt at the Elm of Gisors."

"O, if I was but going with you!"

"I wish I could take you, but it would scarcely do for me to steal the heir of Normandy. What shall I tell him?"

"Tell him," whispered Richard, edging himself close to the Count, and trying to reach his ear, "tell him that I am sorry, now, that I was sullen when he reproved me. I know he

so, and the Count, setting him down again, returned to the dais. Osmond, before going to the Count that evening, ordered Sybald to come and guard the Duke's door. It was a long conference, for Hugh had come to Laon chiefly for the purpose of seeing how it went with his friend's son, and was anxious to know what Osmond thought of the matter. They agreed that at present there did not seem to be any evil intended, and that it rather appeared as if Louis wished only to keep him as a hostage for the tranquillity of the borders of Normandy; but Hugh advised that Osmond should maintain a careful watch, and send intelligence to him on the first token of mischief.

The next morning the Count of Paris quitted Laon, and everything went on in the usual course till the feast of Whitsuntide, when there was always a great display of splendour at the French court. The crown vassals generally came to pay their duty and go with the King to church; and there was a state banquet, at which the King and Queen wore their crowns, and everyone sat in great magnificence according to their rank.

treacherous murderer of William Longsword into the presence of a free-born Norman, unless he would see him slain where he stands. Were it not for the boy, I would challenge the traitor this instant to single combat."

"Well, I can scarce blame you," said the Knight; "but you had best have a care how you tread. Farewell!"

Richard had hardly time to express his indignation, and his wishes that he was a man, before another message came through a groom of Lothaire's train, that the Duke must fast, if he would not consent to feast with the rest.

"Tell Prince Lothaire," replied Richard, "that I am not such a glutton as he—I had rather fast than be choked with eating with Arnulf!"

All the rest of the day, Richard remained in his own chamber, resolved not to run the risk of meeting with Arnulf. The squire remained with him in this voluntary imprisonment, and they occupied themselves, as best they could, with furbishing Osmond's armour, and helping each other out in repeating some of the Sagas. They once heard a great uproar in the

Henry to die, and he had been hanged immediately.

Dark with anger and sorrow grew young Richard's face. He had been fond of his two Norman attendants, he trusted to their attachment, and he would have wept for their loss even if it had happened in any other way. But now, when it had been caused by their enmity to his father's foes, the Flemings, when one had fallen overwhelmed by numbers, and the other been condemned hastily, cruelly, unjustly, it was too much, and he almost choked with grief and indignation. Why had he not been there, to claim Henry as his own vassal, and if he could not save him, at least bid him farewell? Then he would have broken out in angry threats, but he felt his own helplessness, and was ashamed, and he could only shed tears of passionate grief, refusing all Carloman's attempts to comfort him. Osmond was even more concerned; he valued the two Normans extremely for their courage and faithfulness, and had relied on sending intelligence, by their means, to Rouen in case of need. It appeared to him as if the first opportunity had been seized of removing these protectors from the

mands that the Duke quits not the castle in his absence?"

"I was only going as far as the river——" began Richard, but Gerberge cut him short. "Silence, child! I will hear no excuses. Perhaps you think, Sieur de Centeville, that you may take liberties in the King's absence; but I tell you that if you are found without the walls again it shall be at your peril—aye, and his. I'll have those haughty eyes put out if you disobey."

She turned away, and Lothaire looked at them with his air of gratified malice. "You will not lord it over your betters much longer, young pirate," said he, as he followed his mother, afraid to stay to meet the anger he might have excited by the taunt he could not deny himself the pleasure of making; but Richard, who six months ago could not brook a slight disappointment or opposition, had, in his present life of restraint, danger, and vexation, learnt to curb the first outbreak of temper, and to bear patiently instead of breaking out into passion and threats, and now his only thought was of his beloved squire.

"O Osmond! Osmond!" he exclaimed, "they

CHAPTER VIII

It was a fine summer evening, and Richard and Carloman were playing at ball on the steps of the castle gate, when a voice was heard from beneath, begging for alms from the noble Princes in the name of the blessed Virgin, and the two boys saw a pilgrim standing at the gate, wrapt in a long robe of serge, with a staff in his hand surmounted by a cross, a scrip at his girdle, and a broad shady hat, which he had taken off, as he stood making low obeisances and asking charity.

“Come in, holy pilgrim,” said Carloman; “it is late, and you shall sup and rest here to-night.”

“Blessings from Heaven light on you, noble Prince,” replied the pilgrim; and at that moment Richard shouted joyfully, “A Norman, a Norman, 'tis my own dear speech! O, are you not from Normandy? Osmond, Osmond, he comes from home!”

“My Lord! my own Lord!” exclaimed the pilgrim, and, kneeling on one knee at the foot of the

Richard, darting forwards, and throwing himself between Walter and the woodsman, who was preparing to obey Lothaire, just in time to receive on his own bare neck the sharp-cutting leather thong, which raised a long red streak along its course. Lothaire laughed.

“My Lord Duke, what have you done? O leave me—this befits you not!” cried Walter, extremely distressed; but Richard had caught hold of the whip, and called out, “Away! away! run! haste, haste!” and the words were repeated at once by Osmond, Carloman, and many of the French, who, though afraid to disobey the Prince, were unwilling to violate the sanctity of a pilgrim’s person, and the Norman, seeing there was no help for it, obeyed; the French made way for him, and he effected his escape, while Lothaire, after a great deal of storming and raging, went up to his mother to triumph in the cleverness with which he had detected a Norman spy in disguise.

Lothaire was not far wrong; Walter had really come to satisfy himself as to the safety of the little Duke, and try to gain an interview with Osmond. In the latter purpose he failed, though he lingered in the neighbourhood of Laon for

Abbey of Jumièges, to pray for the rescue of his dear little Duke.

In the meantime Louis had sent notice to Laon that he should return home in a week's time, and Richard rejoiced in the prospect, for the King had always been less unkind to him than the Queen, and he hoped to be released from his captivity within the castle. Just at this time he became very unwell; it might have been only the effect of the life of unwonted confinement which he had lately led that was beginning to tell on his health, but after being heavy and uncomfortable for a day or two without knowing what was the matter with him, he was one night attacked with high fever.

Osmond was dreadfully alarmed, knowing nothing at all of the treatment of illness, and, what was worse, fully persuaded that the poor child had been poisoned, and therefore resolved not to call any assistance; he hung over him all night, expecting each moment to see him expire, ready to tear his hair with despair and fury, and yet obliged to restrain himself to the utmost quietness and gentleness to soothe the suffering of the sick child.

Through that night, Richard either tossed

they shall fail for this time! and they shall never have another chance. May Heaven be with us still!"

Richard was too weak and weary to ask what he meant, and for the next few days Osmond watched him with the utmost care. As for food, now that Richard could eat again, Osmond would not hear of his touching what was sent for him from the royal table, but always went down himself to procure food in the kitchen, where he said he had a friend among the cooks, who would, he thought, scarcely poison him intentionally. When Richard was able to cross the room, he insisted on his always fastening the door with the dagger, and never opening to any summons but his own, not even to Prince Carloman's. Richard wondered, but he was obliged to obey; and he knew enough of the perils around him to perceive the reasonableness of Osmond's caution.

Thus several days had passed, the King had returned, and Richard was so much recovered that he had become very anxious to be allowed to go downstairs again, instead of remaining shut up there; but still Osmond would not

· it will all fail if you are not silent and prudent, and we shall be undone."

"I will do anything to get home again!"

"Eat first," said Osmond.

"But what are you going to do? I will not be as foolish as I was when you tried to get me safe out of Rollo's Tower. But I should like to wish Carloman farewell."

"That must not be," said Osmond; "we should not have time to escape if they did not still believe you very ill in bed."

"I am sorry not to wish Carloman goodbye!" repeated Richard; "but shall we see Fru Astrida again, and Sir Eric? and Alberic must come back! O, do let us go! O Normandy, dear Normandy!"

Richard could hardly eat for excitement, while Osmond hastily made his arrangements, girding on his sword, and giving Richard his dagger to put into his belt. He placed the remainder of the provisions in his wallet, threw a thick purple cloth mantle over the Duke, and then desired him to lie down on the straw which he had brought in. "I shall hide you in it," he said, "and carry you through the hall as if I was going to feed my horse."

Presently came Carloman's voice. "O, Osmond de Centeville! is Richard better?"

"He is better, my Lord, I thank you, but hardly yet out of danger."

"O, I wish he was well! And when will you let me come to him, Osmond? Indeed, I would sit quiet and not disturb him!"

"It may not be yet, my Lord; though the Duke loves you well, he told me so but now."

"Did he? O tell him I love him very much, better than anyone here, and it is very dull without him! Tell him so, Osmond."

Richard could hardly help calling out to his dear little Carloman, but he remembered the peril of Osmond's eyes and the Queen's threat, and held his peace, with some vague notion that some day he would make Carloman King of France. In the meantime, half stifled with the straw, he felt himself carried on, down the steps, across the court, and then he knew, from the darkness and the changed sound of Osmond's tread, that they were in the stable. Osmond laid him carefully down and whispered—

"All right, so far. You can breathe?"

"Not well. Can't you let me out?"

"Not yet, not for worlds. Now, tell me if I

Osmond helped the Duke to mount, and sprang to the saddle behind him, set spurs to the horse, and rode on at a quick rate, though not at full speed, as he wished to spare the horse. The twilight faded, the stars came out, and still he rode, his arm round the child, who, as night advanced, grew weary, and often sunk into a sort of half doze, conscious all the time of the trot of the horse. But each step was taking him further from Queen Gerberge and nearer to Normandy, and what recked he of weariness? On—on—the stars grew pale again, and the first pink light of dawn showed in the eastern sky; the sun rose, mounted higher and higher, and the day grew hotter, the horse went more slowly, stumbled, and though Osmond halted and loosed the girth, he only mended his pace for a little while.

Osmond looked grievously perplexed; but they had not gone much further before a party of merchants came in sight, winding their way with a long train of loaded mules, and stout men to guard them, across the plains, like an Eastern, caravan in the desert. They gazed in surprise at the tall young Norman holding the child upon the worn-out war-horse.

pastures, a blue river, on the opposite bank of which rose a high rocky mound, bearing a castle with many a turret and battlement.

“The Epte! the Epte! There is Normandy, sir. Look up, and see your own dukedom.”

“Normandy!” cried Richard, sitting upright. “O, my own home!”

Still the Epte was wide and deep, and the peril was not yet ended. Osmond looked anxiously, and rejoiced to see marks of cattle, as if it had been forsaken. “We must try it,” he said, and dismounting, he waded in, leading the horse, and firmly holding Richard in the saddle. Deep they went, the water rose to Richard’s feet, then to the horse’s neck, then the horse was swimming, and Osmond too, still keeping his firm hold—then there was ground again, the force of the current was less, and they were gaining the bank. At that instant, however, they perceived two men aiming at them with crossbows from the castle, and another standing on the bank above them, who called out, “Hold! none passes the ford of Montémar without permission of the noble Dame Yolande.”

“Ha! Bertrand the Seneschal, is that you?” returned Osmond.

you are safe and free now, and here is the good Dame de Montémar to tend you, far better than a rude squire like me."

"Alas! no," said the Seneschal, "our Dame is gone with young Alberic on a pilgrimage to Jumièges, to pray for the Duke's safety. What joy for them to know that their prayers have been granted!"

Osmond, however, could scarcely rejoice, so alarmed was he at the extreme weariness and exhaustion of his charge, who, when they brought him into the castle hall, hardly spoke or looked, and could not eat. They carried him up to Alberic's bed, where he tossed about restlessly, too tired to sleep.

"Alas! alas!" said Osmond, "I have been too hasty! I have but saved him from the Franks to be his death by my own imprudence."

"Hush! Sieur de Centeville," said the Seneschal's wife, coming into the room, "to talk in that manner is the way to be his death, indeed. Leave the child to me, he is only over-weary."

Osmond was sure his Duke was among friends, and would have been glad to trust him to a woman, but Richard had but one instinct left in all his weakness and exhaustion, to cling

and screams of joy, enough to have awakened any sleeper but one so wearied out as Osmond.

“And is it true? O! am I really in Normandy again?” cried Richard.

“Yes! yes! O yes, my Lord! You are at Montémar. Everything here is yours. The bar-tailed hawk is quite well, and my mother will be here this evening; she let me ride on the instant we heard the news.”

“We rode long and late, and I was very weary!” said Richard; “but I don’t care now we are at home. But I can hardly believe it. O Alberic, it has been very dreary!”

“See here, my Lord!” said Alberic, standing by the window. “Look here, and you will know you are at home again.”

Richard bounded to the window, and what a sight met his eyes! The castle court was thronged with men-at-arms and horses, the morning sun sparkling on many a burnished hauberk and tall conical helmet, and above them waved many a banner and pennon that Richard knew full well. “There! there!” he shouted aloud with glee. “O, there is the horse-shoe of Ferrières! and there the chequers of Warenne! O, and best of all! there is—there is our own red pennon

him, and with outstretched arms exclaimed, “Sir Eric, dear Sir Eric, here I am! Osmond is safe! and is Fru Astrida well?”

The old Baron turned—“My child!” he exclaimed, and clasped him in his mailed arms, while the tears flowed down his rugged cheeks, “Blessed be God that you are safe, and that my son has done his duty!”

“And is Fru Astrida well?”

“Yes, right well, since she heard of your safety. But look round, my Lord, it befits not a Duke to be clinging thus round an old man’s neck. See how many of your true vassals be here to guard you from the villain Franks.”

Richard stood up, and held out his hand, bowing courteously, and acknowledging the greetings of each bold Baron, with a grace and readiness he certainly had not when he left Normandy. He was taller too, and though still pale, and not dressed with much care (since he had hurried on his clothes with no help but Alberic’s)—though his hair was rough and disordered, and the scar of the burn had not yet faded from his cheek, yet still, with his bright blue eyes, glad face, and upright form, he was a princely, promising boy, and the Norman

to meet him (which he had never done before), held out his hand, and said, "Welcome, Count Bernard, welcome. Thank you for coming to guard me! I am very glad to see you once more."

"Ah! my young Lord," said Bernard, "I am right glad to see you out of the clutches of the Franks. You know friend from foe now, methinks."

"Yes, indeed I do, Count Bernard. I know you meant kindly by me, and that I ought to have thanked you, and not been angry when you reproved me. Wait one moment, Sir Count, there is one thing that I promised myself to say, if ever I came safe to my own dear home. Walter — Maurice — Jeannot — all you of my household, and of Sir Eric's—I know before I went away I was often no good lord to you. I was passionate, and proud, and overbearing, but God has punished me for it, when I was far away, among my enemies, and sick and lonely; I am very sorry for it, and I hope you will pardon me, for I will strive, and I hope God will help me, never to be proud and passionate again."

"There, Sir Eric," said Bernard, "you hear what the boy says. If he speaks it out so bold

hour afterwards the drawbridge was lowered to admit the followers of Centeville, and in front of them appeared Fru Astrida's own high cap; Richard made but one bound into her arms, and was clasped to her breast, then held off at arms' length, that she might see how much he was grown, and pity his scar, then hugged closer than ever! but taking another look, she declared that Osmond left his hair like King Harald Horrid-locks;¹ and drawing an ivory comb from her pouch, began to pull out the thick tangles, hurting him to a degree that would once have made him rebel, but now he only fondled her the more.

As to Osmond, when he knelt before her, she blessed him and sobbed over him, and blamed him for overtiring her darling, all in one; and assuredly when night closed in, and Richard had, as of old, told his beads beside her knee, the happiest boy in Normandy was its little Duke.

¹ See note, page 216.

Osmond did not give him so much of his company as usual, but was always at work in the armourer's forge, a low vaulted chamber opening into the castle court. Richard and Alberic were very curious to know what he did there, but he fastened the door with an iron bar, and they were forced to content themselves with listening to the strokes of the hammer keeping time to the voices that sang out loud and cheerily, the song of "Sigurd's sword, and the maiden sleeping within the ring of flame". Fru Astrida said Osmond was quite right, no good weapon-smith ever toiled with open doors, and when the boys asked him questions as to his work, he only smiled, and said that they would see what it was when the call to arms should come.

They thought it near at hand, for tidings came that Louis had assembled an army, and marched into Normandy to recover the person of the young Duke, and to seize the country. No summons, however, arrived, but a message came instead, that Rouen had been surrendered into the hands of the King. Richard shed indignant tears. "My father's castle! My own city in the hands of the foe! Bernard is a traitor, then!"

Centeville was marked out as the prey of the fat French Count who had served for a hostage at Rouen.

“What say you now, my Lord?” said he, after a conference with a messenger at the gate. “The Black Raven has spread its wings. Fifty keels are in the Seine, and Harald Blue-tooth’s Long Serpent at the head of them.”

“The King of Denmark! Come to my aid!”

“Aye, that he is! Come at Bernard’s secret call, to right you, and put you on your father’s seat. Now call honest Harcourt a traitor, because he gave not up your fair dukedom to the flame and sword.”

“No traitor to me,” said Richard, pausing.

“No, verily; but what more would you say?”

“I think, when I come to my dukedom, I will not be so politic,” said Richard; “I will be an open friend or an open foe.”

“The boy grows too sharp for us,” said Sir Eric, smiling; “but it was spoken like his father.”

“He grows more like his blessed father each day,” said Fru Astrida.

“But the Danes, father, the Danes!” said

become of him, until at length the sound of an opening door startled them, and there, in the low archway of the smithy, the red furnace glowing behind him, stood Osmond, clad in bright steel, the links of his hauberk reflecting the light, and on his helmet a pair of golden wings, while the same device adorned his long pointed kite-shaped shield.

“Your wings! our wings!” cried Richard, “the bearing of Centeville!”

“May they fly after the foe, not before him,” said Sir Eric. “Speed thee well, my son; let not our Danish cousins say we learn Frank graces instead of Northern blows.”

With such farewells Osmond quitted Senlis, while the two boys hastened to the battlements, to watch him as long as he remained in view.

The highest tower became their principal resort, and their eyes were constantly on the heath where he had disappeared; but days passed, and they grew weary of the watch, and betook themselves to games in the castle court.

One day Alberic, in the character of a dragon, was lying on his back panting hard, so as to

of that; I know how men ride when they flee from the battle."

"No, indeed, there is no discomfiture in the pace of that steed," said Sir Eric, who had by this time joined them.

"I see him clearer! I see the horse," cried Richard, dancing with eagerness, so that Sir Eric caught hold of him, exclaiming, "You will be over the battlements! hold still! better hear of a battle lost than that!"

"He bears somewhat in his hand," said Alberic.

"A banner or pennon," said the warder; "methinks he rides like the young Baron."

"He does! My brave boy! He has done good service," exclaimed Sir Eric, as the figure became more developed. "The Danes have seen how we train our young men."

"His wings bring good tidings," said Richard. "Let me go, Sir Eric, I must tell Fru Astrida."

The drawbridge was lowered, the portcullis raised, and as all the dwellers in the castle stood gathered in the court, in rode the warrior with the winged helm, bearing in his hand a drooping banner; lowering it as he entered, it unfolded, and displayed, trailing on the ground

“On the bank of the Dive,” said Osmond. “Ah! father, you might well call old Harcourt wary, his name might better have been Fox-heart, than Bear-heart! he had sent to the Franks a message of distress, that the Danes were on him in full force, and to pray them to come to his aid.”

“I trust there was no treachery! No foul dealing shall be wrought in my name!” exclaimed Richard, with such dignity of tone and manner as made all feel he was indeed their Duke, and forget his tender years.

“No, or should I tell the tale with joy like this,” said Osmond. “Bernard’s view was to bring the Kings together, and let Louis see you had friends to maintain your right. He sought but to avoid bloodshed.”

“And how chanced it?”

“The Danes were encamped on the Dive, and so soon as the French came in sight, Blue-tooth sent a messenger to Louis to summon him to quit Neustria, and leave it to you, its lawful owner. Thereupon Louis, hoping to win him over with wily words, invited him to hold a personal conference.”

“Where were you, Osmond?”

boiled as I answered, for it was Montreuil himself! ‘The cause of your Duke’s death?’ said the Dane. ‘Ha, ye Normans are fallen sons of Odin to see him yet live.’”

“You said, I trust, my son, that we follow not the laws of Odin?” said Fru Astrida.

“I had no space for a word, grandmother, the Danes took the vengeance on themselves. In one moment they rushed on Herluin with their axes, and the unhappy man was dead. All was tumult. Everyone struck without knowing at whom, or for what. Some shouted *Thor Hulfe!* some *Dieu aide!* others *Montjoie St. Denis!* Northern blood against French, that was all our guide. I found myself at the foot of this standard, and had a hard combat for it, but I bore it away at last.”

“And the Kings?”

“They hurried out of the tent, it seems, to rejoin their men. Louis mounted, but you know of old, my Lord, he is but an indifferent horseman, and the beast carried him into the midst of the Danes, where King Harald caught his bridle and delivered him to four Knights to keep. Whether he dealt secretly with them, or whether they, as they declared, lost sight of him

as he dealt with me, so might Heaven deal with him."

"Remember it, my child, beware of broken vows," said Father Lucas, "but remember it not in triumph over a fallen foe. It were better that all came at once to the chapel, to bestow their thanksgivings where alone they are due."

He and Alberic betook themselves to the watch-tower, and, by and by, saw a cavalcade approaching with a curtained vehicle in the midst, slung between two horses. "That cannot be the Princes," said Alberic, "that must surely be some sick lady."

"I only hope it is not the Queen," exclaimed Richard in dismay. "But no! Lothaire is such a coward, no doubt he was afraid to ride, and she would not trust her darling, without shutting him up like a demoiselle. But come down, Alberic, I will say nothing unkind of Lothaire, if I can help it."

Richard met the Princes in the court, his sunny hair uncovered, and bowing with such becoming courtesy, that Fru Astrida pressed her son's arm, and bade him say if their little Duke was not the fairest and noblest child in Christendom.

With black looks, Lothaire stepped from the litter, took no heed of the little Duke, but roughly calling his attendant Charlot to follow him, he marched into the hall, vouchsafing neither word nor look to any as he passed, threw himself into the highest seat, and ordered Charlot to bring him some wine.

and started with a fresh cry of terror; her tall figure, high cap, and wrinkled face were to him witch-like, and as she knew no French, he understood not her kind words. However, he let Richard lead him into the hall, where Lothaire sat moodily in the chair, with one leg tucked under him, and his finger in his mouth.

“I say, Sir Duke,” said he, “is there nothing to be had in this old den of yours? not a drop of Bordeaux?”

Richard tried to repress his anger at this uncivil way of speaking, and answered, that he thought there was none, but there was plenty of Norman cider.

“As if I would taste your mean peasant drinks! I bade them bring the supper, why does it not come?”

“Because you are not master here,” trembled on Richard’s lips, but he forced it back, and answered that it would soon be ready, and Carloman looked imploringly at his brother and said, “Do not make them angry, Lothaire.”

“What, crying still, foolish child!” said Lothaire. “Do you not know that if they dare to cross us, my father will treat them as they deserve.

the dog, in seeking for scraps, again came towards him.

“Take it away!” he repeated, and struck it with his foot. The dog growled, and Richard started up in indignation.

“Prince Lothaire,” he said, “I care not what else you do, but my dogs and my people you shall not maltreat.”

“I tell you I am Prince, I do what I will! ha! who laughs there?” cried the passionate boy, stamping on the floor.

“It is not so easy for French Princes to scourge freeborn Normans here,” said the rough voice of Walter the huntsman; there is a reckoning for the stripe my Lord Duke bore for me.”

“Hush, hush, Walter!” began Richard; but Lothaire had caught up a footstool, and was aiming it at the huntsman, when his arm was caught. Osmond, who knew him well enough to be prepared for some such outbreak, held him fast by both hands, in spite of his passionate screams and struggles, which were like those of one frantic.

Sir Eric, meanwhile, thundered forth in his Norman patois, “I would have you to know, young sir, Prince though you be, you are our

“It was Lothaire that did it,” repeated Carloman; “and, indeed, you must not be angry with me, for my mother was so cross with me for not having stopped Osmond when I met him with the bundle of straw, that she gave me a blow that knocked me down. And were you really there, Richard?”

Richard told his story, and was glad to find Carloman could smile at it; and then Fru Astrida advised him to take his little friend to bed. Carloman would not lie down without still holding Richard’s hand, and the little Duke spared no pains to set him at rest, knowing what it was to be a desolate captive far from home.

“I thought you would be good to me,” said Carloman. “As to Lothaire, it serves him right that you should use him as he used you.”

“O no, Carloman! if I had a brother, I would never speak so of him.”

“But Lothaire is so unkind.”

“Ah! but we must be kind to those who are unkind to us.”

The child rose on his elbow, and looked into Richard’s face. “No one ever told me so before.”

“O, Carloman, not Brother Hilary?”

could at first see nothing, but presently he beheld a dark lump on the floor.

"Prince Lothaire," he said, "here is—"

Lothaire cut him short. "Get away!" he said. "If it is your turn now, it will be mine by and by. I wish my mother had kept her word, and put your eyes out."

Richard's temper did not serve for such a reply. "It is a foul shame of you to speak so, when I only came out of kindness to you, so I shall leave you here all night, and not ask Sir Eric to let you out."

And he swung back the heavy door with a resounding clang. But his heart smote him when he told his beads, and remembered what he had said to Carloman. He knew he could not sleep in his warm bed when Lothaire was in that cold gusty room. To be sure, Sir Eric said it would do him good, but Sir Eric little knew how tender the French Princes were.

So Richard crept down in the dark, slid back the bolt, and called, "Prince, Prince, I am sorry I was angry. Come out, and let us try to be friends."

"What do you mean?" said Lothaire.

"Come out of the cold and dark. Here am

CHAPTER XI

As the Baron had said, there was more peace now that Lothaire had learnt to know that he must submit, and that no one cared for his threats of his father's or his mother's vengeance. He was very sulky and disagreeable, and severely tried Richard's forbearance, but there were no fresh outbursts, and on the whole, from one week to another, there might be said to be an improvement. He could not always hold aloof from one so good-natured and good-humoured as the little Duke, and the fact of being kept in order could not but have some beneficial effect on him, after such spoiling as his had been at home.

Indeed, Osmond was once heard to say, it was a pity the boy was not to be a hostage for life; to which Sir Eric replied, "So long as we have not the training of him."

Little Carloman, meanwhile, recovered from

less than even the little leather-coated huntsman, he seemed to take the holy lessons in faster than any of them, yes, and to act upon them too. His feeble health seemed to make him enter into their comfort and meaning more than even Richard and Alberic, and Father Lucas soon told Fru Astrida that it was a saintly-minded child.

Indeed, Carloman was the more disposed to thoughtfulness, because he was incapable of joining in the sports of the other boys. A race round the court was beyond his strength, the fresh wind on the battlements made him shiver and cower, and loud shouting play was dreadful to him. In old times, he used to cry when Lothaire told him he must have his hair cut and be a priest; now, he only said quietly, he should like it very much if he could be good enough.

Fru Astrida sighed, and shook her head, and feared the poor child would never grow up to be anything on this earth. Great as had been the difference at first between him and Richard, it was now far greater. Richard was an unusually strong boy for ten years old, upright and broad-chested, and growing very fast, while Carloman seemed to dwindle, stooped

him, softening his step, and lowering his voice, as he entered the hall, lest Carloman should be asleep. *

“Richard, is it you?” said the little boy, as the young figure came round the settle in the darkening twilight.

“Yes; how do you feel now, Carloman, are you better?”

“No better, thanks, dear Richard;” and the little wasted fingers were put into his.

“Has the pain come again?”

“No, I have been lying still, musing; Richard, I shall never be better.”

“O, do not say so; you will, indeed you will, when spring comes.”

“I feel as if I should die,” said the little boy. “I think I shall; but do not grieve, Richard. I do not feel much afraid. You said it was happier there than here, and I know it now.”

“Where my blessed father is,” said Richard, thoughtfully. “But O, Carloman, you are so young to die!”

“I do not want to live. This is a fighting, hard world, full of cruel people, and it is peace there. You are strong and brave, and will

way. Richard and Lothaire were soon at the bedside. Carloman still lay asleep, his hands folded on his breast, but his breath came in long gasps. Father Lucas was praying over him, and candles were placed on each side of the bed. All was still, the boys not daring to speak or move. There came a longer breath—then they heard no more. He was, indeed, gone to a happier home, a truer royalty than ever had been his on earth.

Then the boys' grief burst out. Lothaire screamed for his mother, and sobbed out that he should die too, he must go home. Richard stood by the bed, large silent tears rolling down his cheeks, and his chest heaving with suppressed sobs.

Fru Astrida led them from the room, back to their beds. Lothaire soon cried himself to sleep; Richard lay awake, sorrowful and in deep thought, while that scene in St. Mary's at Rouen returned before his eyes, and though it had passed nearly two years ago, its meaning and its teaching had sunk deep into his mind and now stood before him more completely.

“Where shall I go, when I come to die, if I have not returned good for evil?” And

CHAPTER XII

“Sir Eric,” said Richard, “you told me there was a Parlement to be held at Falaise, between Count Bernard and the King of Denmark. I mean to attend it. Will you come with me, or shall Osmond go, and you remain in charge of the Prince?”

“How now, Lord Richard, you were not wont to love a Parlement?”

“I have something to say,” replied Richard.

The Baron made no objection, only telling his mother that the Duke was a marvellous wise child, and that he would soon be fit to take the government himself.

Lothaire lamented the more when he found that Richard was going away; his presence seemed to him a protection, and he fancied, now Carloman was dead, that his former injuries were about to be revenged. The Duke assured him, repeatedly, that he meant him nothing

yonder was his keep of Falaise, the strongest castle in Normandy.

The country was far more broken as they advanced; narrow valleys, and sharp hills, each little vale full of wood and interspersed with rocks. "A choice place for game," Sir Eric said; and Richard, as he saw a herd of deer dash down a forest glade, exclaimed that they must come here to stay, for some autumn sport.

There seemed to be huntsmen abroad in the woods, for through the frosty air came the baying of dogs, the shouts and calls of men, and now and then, the echoing ringing notes of a bugle. Richard's eyes and cheeks glowed with excitement, and he pushed his brisk little pony on faster and faster, unheeding that the heavier men and horses of his suite were not keeping pace with him, on the rough ground, and through the tangled boughs.

Presently, a strange sound of growling and snarling was heard close at hand; his pony swerved aside, and could not be made to advance, so Richard, dismounting, dashed through some briers, and there, on an open space, beneath a precipice of dark ivy-covered rock that rose like a wall, he beheld a huge grey

Vige! How now? my brave hound!" he said in the Northern tongue, though not quite with the accent Richard was accustomed to hear.

"Art hurt?"

"Much torn, I fear," Richard called out, as the faithful creature wagged his tail, and strove to rise and meet his master.

"Ha, lad! what art thou?" exclaimed the hunter, amazed at seeing the boy between the dead wolf and wounded dog. "You look like one of those Frenchified Norman gentillesse, with your smooth locks and gilded baldric, yet your words are Norse. By the hammer of Thor! that is a dagger in the wolf's throat."

"It is mine," said Richard. "I found your dog nearly spent, and I made in to the rescue."

"You did? Well done! I would not have lost Vige for all the plunder of Italy. I am beholden to you, my brave young lad," said the stranger, all the time examining and caressing the hound. "What is your name? you cannot be southern bred."

As he spoke, more shouts came near, and the Baron de Centeville rushed through the trees, holding Richard's pony by the bridle. "My

Christian of you, more's the pity. You have the Northern spirit so strong, I had forgotten it. Come, walk by my side, and let me hear what you would ask. Holla! you Sweyn, carry Vige up to the castle, and look to his wounds. Now for it, young Jarl."

"My boon is, that you would set free Prince Lothaire."

"What? The young Frank? Why, they kept you captive, burnt your face, and would have made an end of you, but for your clever bonder."

"That is long past, and Lothaire is so wretched. His brother is dead, and he is sick with grief, and he says he shall die, if he does not go home."

"A good thing too, for the treacherous race to die out in him! What should you care for him, he is your foe."

"I am a Christian," was Richard's answer.

"Well, I promised you whatever you might ask. All my share of his ransom, or his person, bond or free, is yours. You have only to prevail with your own Jarls and Bonders."

Richard feared this would be more difficult, but Abbot Martin came to the meeting, and took his part. Moreover, the idea of their

if I lived with you, I might be good like you. I will never forget what you have done for me."

When Richard once more entered Rouen in state, his subjects shouting round him in transports of joy, better than all his honour and glory was the being able to enter the Church of Our Lady, and kneel by his father's grave with a clear conscience, and the sense that he had tried to keep that last injunction.

King Louis was killed by a fall from his horse, Lothaire died in early youth, and in him ended the degenerate line of Charlemagne; Hugh Capet, the son of Richard's old friend, Hugh the White, was on the throne of France, his sure ally and brother-in-law, looking to him for advice and aid in all his undertakings.

Fru Astrida and Sir Eric had long been in their quiet graves; Osmond and Alberic were among Richard's most trusty counsellors and warriors; Abbot Martin, in extreme old age, still ruled the Abbey of Jumièges, where Richard, like his father, loved to visit him, hold converse with him, and refresh himself in the peaceful cloister, after the affairs of state and war.

And Richard himself was a grey-headed man, of lofty stature and majestic bearing. His eldest son was older than he had been himself when he became the little Duke, and he had even begun to remember his father's project of an old age to be spent in retirement and peace.

It was on a summer eve that Duke Richard sat beside the white-bearded old Abbot within the porch, looking at the sun shining with soft declining beams on the arches and columns; they

"I have seen that face under a helmet," said the Duke. "Thou art Arnulf of Flanders!"

There was a deep silence.

"And wherefore art thou here?"

"I delayed to own the French King Hugh. He has taken my towns, and ravaged my lands. Each Frenchman, and each Norman, vows to slay me, in revenge for your wrongs, Lord Duke. I have been driven hither and thither, in fear of my life, till I thought of the renown of Duke Richard, not merely the most fearless, but the most merciful of Princes. I sought to come hither, trusting that when the holy Father Abbot beheld my bitter repentance, he would intercede for me, with you, most noble Prince, for my safety and forgiveness. O, gallant Duke, forgive and spare!"

"Rise up, Arnulf," said Richard. "Where the hand of the Lord hath stricken, it is not for man to exact his own reckoning. My father's death has been long forgiven, and what you may have planned against myself has, by the blessing of Heaven, been brought to naught. From Normans, at least, you are safe, and it shall be my work to ensure your pardon from my brother the King. Come into the refectory, you need



did Hugues le blanc hold his son-in-law, that on his death-bed he committed his son Hugues Capet to his guardianship, though the Duke was then scarcely above twenty, proposing him as the model of wisdom and of chivalry.

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Harald of Norway, who made a vow never to trim his hair till he had made himself sole king of the country. The war lasted ten years, and he thus might well come to deserve his title of Horrid-locks, which was changed to that of Harfangre, or fair-haired, when he celebrated his final victory, by going into a bath at Môre, and committing his shaggy hair to be cut and arranged by his friend, Jarl Rognwald, father of Rollo.

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Richard obtained for Arnulf the restitution of Arras, and several other Flemish towns. He died eight years afterwards, in 996, leaving several children, among whom, his daughter Emma is connected with English history by her marriage, first with Ethelred the Unready, and secondly, with Knute, the grandson of his firm friend and ally, Harald Blue-tooth. His son was Richard, called the Good; his grandson, Robert the Magnificent; his great-grandson, William the Conqueror, who brought the Norman race to England. Few names in history shine with so consistent a lustre as that of Richard, at first the little Duke, afterwards Richard aux longues jambes, but always Richard sans peur. This little sketch has only brought forward the perils of his childhood, but his early manhood was likewise full of adventures, in which he always proved himself brave, honourable, pious, and forbearing; but for these, our readers must search for themselves into early French history, where all they will find concerning our hero will only tend to exalt his character.

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9. held counsel with, consulted with, made plans along with.
 steward, the person who looked after the domestic concerns of a great family, and who was termed the *house steward*.
 venison, the flesh of animals taken in hunting that may be used as food; now used only of the flesh of deer.
 Duke William, son of Rollo, the first Duke of Normandy. Duke is a title of nobility of the highest order; duchy, or dukedom, the possessions of a duke; ducal, pertaining to a duke.
 bugle-horn, a hunting horn, a bugle, a musical wind instrument.

10. Dame Astrida, the mother of Sir Eric de Centeville of Bayeux, the guardian of the Little Duke. Dame was formerly a title of honour for a woman. Lat. *domina*, a lady.
 a stag of ten branches, a male deer with ten prongs or points on its antlers or horns.
 shaft, something long and straight; an arrow shot from a bow.
 Fru Astrida, Dame or Lady Astrida. *Fru* was Old Norse corresponding to German *Frau*.
 haunch, the part that lies between the last ribs and the thigh; a joint of venison (or mutton).
 Walter, the forester, or person whose duty it was to watch the forest and protect the game.
 antlers, horns—literally, the branches of a stag's horn in front of the eyes.

11. vassal, under the old feudal system, anyone holding land from a superior lord, a subject.
 Langue d'oui, or langue d'oïl. In the earliest period of the French language two great divisions appeared, which were named from the two differing forms of the word for 'yes' (French *oui*) which they presented. To the north of a line drawn on the map of France from Rochelle to Grenoble existed a group of dialects in which 'yes' was *oïl*. These were the *langue d'oïl*. To the south, a group much more like modern Italian and Spanish—that is, much more like Latin—made up the *langue d'oc*.

12. Count of Flanders. A Count is a title of nobility on the Continent of Europe corresponding to the British title *Earl*. Flanders anciently included that department of France now called Nord.
 spit, a long thin bit of wood or metal, pointed at one end or at both ends, and used in roasting meat.
 to dress, to prepare food for the table, and here, to put on clothing or ornaments.
 tunic, a loose coat or frock, drawn in at the waist.
 over soon, too early.
 Richard of the Sharp Axe, &c. Such titles were given (or assumed) on account of some personal trait or characteristic. They were in a sense nicknames, that is, added names.
 Sigurds and Ragnars, hero-warriors of the old Norse songs.
 13. dragons, fabled winged serpents of old-world myths,

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18. **Provence**, an ancient province of France. Capital, Aix. The Provençal language (the old *langue d'oc*) has been pre-eminently distinguished for its literature.

19. **crown vassals**, nobles holding their possessions direct from the king.

King Ethelstane, also Athelstan, reigned from 925 to 941. He was a son of Alfred the Great, defeated the Danes at Brunanburh, and became the first sole monarch of England.

King Alfred the Truth-Teller. Alfred the Great reigned as King of Wessex, whose capital was Winchester, from 871 to 901. He encouraged learning, set up schools, translated books from Latin into English, and started the writing of the oldest history of England, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

20. **feud**, a war carried on by private persons or by families against one another.

Odin, also **Woden**, the chief of the gods in the Old Norse myths. The name survives in *Wednesday* (=Woden's Day).

Thor, the god of thunder; next to Odin, whose son he was, the chief of the Old Norse gods. The name survives in *Thursday* (=Thor's Day).

22. **coronet**, a small crown inferior to that worn by a sovereign.

23. **distaff**, a *staff*, forming part of the spinning-wheel used in former times, to the upper part of which was bound the flax, hemp, or wool that was to be spun into thread.

spindle (from the verb *spin*), a little pin or rod with which the wool or flax was twisted as it was drawn from the distaff.

24. **Earl Rollo**, also called Ralph, the first Duke of Normandy.

Archbishop Franco. The Normans or Northmen, it should be remembered, were pagans, while Christianity had been established in France for centuries.

Neustrian. Neustria, or the Kingdom of the West, one of the three great kingdoms into which France was divided under its earliest kings, extended from the river Meuse westward to the Channel, and southwards to the river Loire, but did not include Brittany. Normandy was, therefore, only a small part of it.

King Charles, Charles III of France, always called "the Simple". For his feebleness in yielding up Normandy to Earl Rollo he was afterward forced to give up the crown, and a more warlike monarch was set in his place.

25. **smooth meads**. *Mead* is an older form of *meadow*. The mountainous regions of France lie to the west and south, while to the north the country is flat, and forms part of the Great Plain of Europe, which stretches away to the Ural Mountains.

fiord, also **fjord**, a deep, narrow inlet of the sea in Norway and Sweden.

27. **liegeman**. *Liege* (from the French) at first meant *free*, and so subjects still speak of their sovereign as their 'liege lord'; a 'liegeman' was a soldier free from all duty save service to his

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37. candles (usually blessed by a priest at Candlemas, 2nd February) are burned as offerings in Roman Catholic churches.

 chanter, sung; mainly used of solemn singing or intoning of hymns or psalms.

38. font, basin used in Christian churches; especially the basin containing the water with which infants are baptized. (Doublet of *fount*, *fountain*.)

 rough hair shirt, such as was often worn by penitents, monks, and others, whose belief was that to afflict the body, whether by fasting or by any other discomfort, benefited the soul.

39. sense here means *consciousness*, or *senses* (plural)—not in its usual meaning of *wisdom* or *understanding*.

the old Dane, Count Bernard.

abye (for *a-buy*), in Old English, to pay well for. Note that in the speech of the characters old-fashioned words, and words like this, no longer in use, are constantly occurring. This use of *archaic* language is a favourite device of story-tellers who deal with ancient times and aim at carrying the reader's mind back to the period they are writing about.

40. Jumièges, a village in the neighbourhood of Rouen. Here in the time of the earliest kings of France, was founded an abbey or monastery (see p. 55). An *abbot* is the ruler or superior of the monks dwelling together in one monastery; an *abbess*, in like manner, is at the head of the nuns in a convent.

Lord Abbot. During the Middle Ages the higher clergy attained to immense importance throughout Europe. Bishops, abbots, &c., were known as Lords Spiritual, and their power in different states was far greater than that of the lay lords.

passes, surpasses; goes beyond (your duty).

41. Pagan, unbeliever, heathen. The word in Latin means a *villager*, and then, because the Christian faith reached the country places but slowly, came to mean one who was not a Christian. So also *heathen* first meant merely 'a dweller on the heath'—on the moorlands, far from the cities where Christianity was established.

43. sanctuary of thy Redeemer, holy place or church of Jesus Christ, the Saviour.

44. reverences, bows showing respect, acts of courtesy.

45. manor, the lands belonging to a nobleman, or as much of them as he kept for his own use.

choir, the part of a church set aside for the choristers or singers.

Bishops, clergymen set over the priests and deacons of a particular district called a *diocese*, and acting under an *Archbishop*.

mitres, the headdresses of archbishops and bishops.

pastoral staff, a long staff carried as an emblem of authority by archbishops and bishops.

altar, the table on which the priest consecrates (blesses and makes sacred) the elements used in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; a communion table.

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59. olive cheek, in colour like the olive, brownish-green; often used of the sallow complexion of the people of southern Europe.

Ganger, walker. So tall, it is said, was Duke Rollo that when he bestrode his horse, he could place his feet on the ground on each side of it, and so might have walked, although on horseback.

60. shamefaced, changed from the older, correct word *shamefast*, that is, held *fast*, embarrassed, by *shame* or modesty.

61. vaulted. The verb *vault*, to leap, and the noun *vault*, a chamber with an arched roof, are both from the same Latin word, and both contain the idea of turning or rolling round.

spiral stone stairs, stairs such as are built inside round towers, which reach the summit in one unbroken flight, following, as they ascend, the circular form of the walls into which they are set.

62. mortar, building cement.

66. domineer, to play the tyrant, 'to lord it' over.

67. chaplain, at first, a priest attached to the service of a chapel; usually, a clergyman serving a particular regiment, &c., or, as here, a single family.

Parlement, the French word from which the English word *Parliament* comes. The original meaning of the word is 'place for speaking' (Fr. *parler*, to speak).

68. Exchequer, treasury. The word is connected with "chequer", to mark out in squares or *checks*, accounts having formerly been reckoned on a board figured like a chess-board by means of counters.

Montreuil, north of the town of Arras.

Hugh of Paris, Hugh the Great, called also "the White" (see p. 131), by whose aid Louis IV, with whom this story starts, obtained his throne, and whose ever-increasing power made a way clear for his own son, Hugh Capet, who afterwards became King of France. The line of kings descended from Hugh Capet was the third royal house of France.

70. import, mean, signify, imply.

71. portend, foreshadow, forebode. A *portent* is a sign of coming calamity.

court, courtyard, the space enclosed within the outer wall in front of a castle. *Court* is also used to denote the residence of a king, and might be used of the hall in which King Louis was meanwhile receiving his *courtiers*.

72. Lothaire, son and successor of Louis IV. Carloman's death in captivity is described towards the end of the story.

73. page, a boy who waited on a person of distinction, as a *squire* waited on a knight.

74. on the alert: on the lookout. *Alert* alone means 'on the watch'.

wiling, beguiling; luring into his hands.

forsooth, in truth.

75. St. Ouen. On the river Seine.

class of priests or soothsayers whose duty was to foretell future happenings from certain signs (called *omens*). The direction in which birds chanced to fly, the way in which they sang, for instance, were among the signs they went by.

90. than his wont, than was his custom, than he looked usually.

rascaille, rabble or mob of the lowest class; a word formed by the author from *rascal*, which itself was once a collective noun meaning *rabble, scum*.

92. **exile**. This paragraph gives the substance of the speech actually spoken by Louis IV on this occasion. Louis, from his having lived in exile abroad in England, is distinguished in history by the name of Louis d'Outremer, that is, Louis from Overseas.

guerdon, reward, recompence, return.

93. **his installation oath**. For a description of the ceremonies with which Richard was *installed*, or publicly acknowledged Duke of Normandy, and for the oath or vow he then took, see p. 46.

95. **the ban and arrière ban**—French expressions. In feudal times only the upper classes performed military service. The name *ban* was given to the higher nobility, who were *summoned* into the field directly by the king or sovereign (here, by the duke); *arrière ban* to the lesser nobles, each of whom held his lands from (was vassal of) some one of the greater lords, and was in turn called out by that lord.

the Italian war with the Saracens. Saracen was the general name given in the Middle Ages to all Mohammedans (or followers of the prophet Mohammed). The Arabs, whose aim was to convert the entire world by the sword, carried their faith into Asia and Africa, and seemed likely at one time to conquer Europe. The Moors (Saracens from the Barbary Coast of Africa) entered Spain in the opening years of the eighth century, and there set up an empire which they maintained till the year 1492. By the beginning of the tenth century Saracens were masters of Sardinia, Sicily, and even of some parts of southern Italy, whence from time to time they harried the country as far as the very gates of Rome.

96. **King Harald Blue-tooth, of Denmark.**

keels. Strictly, a keel is the lowest beam in the framework of a ship or boat, which runs from stem to stern, and supports all the others; here used for *ship*, or *boat*.

Senlis. North-east of Beauvais.

97. **at unawares**, unexpectedly, without warning; usually, *unawares*.

99. **esquire**, the word of which *squire* is a shortened form; now usually added as a title of respect to the name of persons of good worldly position; a courtesy title.

102. **booth-like shops**. Booths, slight wooden sheds or stalls for the display of wares at market or fair, were the only shops in those days.

palfrey, in the Middle Ages, a fine horse ridden by sovereigns and nobles on grand occasions; sometimes, also, a lady's saddle horse.

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119. puny, small and feeble. Another form of this word is *puisne*, which, as a term in law, means 'lower in rank'.

120. godson, son in baptism; corresponding to *godfather* and *godmother* (see p. 46).

121. latent, hidden, seerct, unscen.

123. abated, decreascd, diminished, grown less.
Iceland, a large island in the Arctic Ocean, belonging to Denmark.
The oldest Norse literature is Icelandic.

124. Berserker, among the Northmen, a fiercc warrior.

126. bandy words, strike words to and fro, exchange angry words.

127. falconer, servant who was charged with the duty of training and looking after the *falcons* used in hunting.

128. contemning, despising, looking down upon, showing contempt for.

130. the Holy Land, Palestine, a part of Syria, in Turkey in Asia; so called from its having been the scene of the life and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. A Journey or Pilgrimage to the places of New Testament history was in those days considered a work of piety.
tolerably, literally, *bearably*, but used exactly like *fairly*, *pretty*, *happy*, *happy enough*.

131. Easter, in the Christian Church, a festival (falling between March 21 and April 26) held to keep fresh the memory of the resurrection of Christ.
Hugh the White. See p. 68.
flaxen, like flax in colour.

132. deep in story-telling, busily engaged in story-telling.
Gisors, in the neighbourhood of Rouen.

134. Whitsuntide, Whitsunday, the seventh Sunday after Easter (see p. 131), keeps fresh the memory of the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descnded upon the Apostles. Whitsuntide=Whitsun-time.

135. marshalling, setting in order, arranging. The noun *Marshall* (which originally was an Old German word, and meant simply 'groom') is used in two senses: (1) a military officer of the highest rank, and (2) a master of ceremonies.

136. tread, walk or step, but here, to conduct oneself.

139. Oise, a tributary of the Seine, rising in the Ardennes, in Belgium.
incensed, enraged, irritated, angered.

140. Sieur, here contemptuously, 'Mr'.

141. affront, put to shame, insult openly.

142. alms (noun, singular), anything given in charity.
pilgrim, one who, for religious reasons, makes a journey to some holy place, or in order to keep some pious vow.
scrip. Walter wears the usual dress of the pilgrims of the Middle Ages. The *scrip* was a small bag or wallet, in which was placed the alms received from the charitable.

167. castle of Coucy, the stronghold of a family in Picardy (an ancient province to the east of Normandy). The head of this family bore under his coat of arms the proud motto, "I am no king, nor duke, nor count either: I am the lord of Couey."

168. armourer's forge. Such a smithy or workshop as is here described for the making and repair of armour was a necessity in every castle and fortress.

weapon-smith. Compare blacksmith, locksmith, silversmith, &c.

169. varlet now means a *rascal*; here used in an older sense for *youth* or *stripling*. Another and later form of the same word is *valet* (vá-let), a body-servant.

170. Black Raven. The much-feared standard of the Norse rovers was a Black Raven on a blood-red field.

Denmark. It was in this, the tenth century, that Denmark became a separate kingdom. The Danes afterwards conquered Norway, and even succeeded in maintaining, from 1016 till 1042, a kingdom in England.

verily, truly, in truth. *Very* (now an adverb) was originally simply the French adjective (*vrai*, older *verai*) meaning *true*; so in such phrases as 'in very truth', 'in very deed', 'very God'.

171. Sea-King. Often used of these seafaring rover chiefs like Harald.

172. the bearing, here simply 'the coat of arms'.

in the character of a dragon, imitating a dragon, playing the part of a dragon. The dragons of the old tales breathed fire and smoke.

173. warden, guard, sentinel; now used of prison guards, turnkeys, &c. See note on *warden* p. 58.

174. portcullis, 'sliding door'. The drawbridge led across the moat to the castle gate. In the gateway, as a further precaution against surprise, there was suspended a door or grating of wood and iron, which, running in grooves in the masonry, could be let down at a moment's notice.

175. lilies, the *fleur-de-lys*. See p. 107.

kinsmen, relatives by blood, of the same Scandinavian blood.

skull-goblet. It was a custom to fashion the skull of a slain enemy into a drinking cup. In the Valhalla (heaven) of their after-life, the fierce pagans believed that the brave warrior would sit feasting evermore, and that his drinking cups would be the skulls of his foes.

knife. This rebuke, and the wonder expressed by Richard at the glass in the bedroom windows at Laon, show the small degree of civilization to which the Normans themselves had attained.



Portcullis

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195. hawking, hunting with falcons.

198. scene, the lying-in-state of his father.

199. screened couch, couch or bed hidden, or shut in, behind a screen.
lapped in lead, laid in a coffin or shell of lead.

200. Falaise, in the river basin of the Dive, the birthplace of William the Conqueror.

203. mortal combat, fight to the death.
brindled, with spotted or striped markings.

204. gentilesse, gentle folk.
baldrick, girdle or belt.

205. boon, request, petition. 'Tell me your boon', Name the reward that would best satisfy you.

206. bonder, yeoman; original meaning, *husbandman*.

207. St. Clair sur Epte. It was at St. Clair on the Epte that Charles the Simple, King of France, in the year 912, gave Normandy to Richard's grandfather Rollo (and, with it, the hand of his daughter, Giselle).

210. ended. A son of Lothaire reigned from 986 to 987, when he was poisoned.
beams, sunbeams.

211. to take sanctuary; to find refuge and protection. In those times, any person, even a criminal, who took refuge within a Christian church or *sanctuary* (holy place) was safe from the violence of pursuers.

212. Arnulf. Besides forgiving Arnulf, Duke Richard got back for him Arras (in what used to be "French Flanders") and several other Flemish towns.

Hugh, Hugh Capet. See p. 68.

stricken. This past participle of the verb *strike* is used instead of *struck* when we speak of effects of disease or of the hand of God.

refectory, hall or room in a monastery where the monks took their meals in company.

